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OPINION METER This week's poll:

For those who received refunds from the NMI Retirement Fund, what did you do with the money?

Let your voice be heard! Go to www.saipantribune.com to cast your vote.

INSIDE



The Guam Army National Guard's last cluster of soldiers leaves Af-**➤ PAGE 13**

NATION



The glitch-plagued rollout of the health care overhaul is the top story of 2013. **➤ PAGE 16**

LIFE & STYLE



Miley Cyrus is this year's pop-culture prom queen. > PAGE 20

PERSON OF THE YEAR

Judge Joseph N. Camacho

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE

uperior Court Associate Judge Joseph Norita Camacho is feared by habitual offenders whenever he bangs his 10-lb stainless steel gavel. That's because he refuses to budge an inch when faced with repeat offenders who seem to treat the court system like a perpetual revolving door, where they keep getting away with lenient or suspended sentences.

In Camacho's court, there is no such rent," Camacho said. thing as a "slap on the wrist" against habitual offenders who have no respect for the law.

"Such is the leniency of past courts, it foster a perception that criminals get away with crime," Camacho once said in describing the past sentences imposed on an ex-convict. In that instance, Camacho slapped the ex-convict with the full maximum sentence of 40 years and six months in prison without the possibility of parole for kidnapping and raping a minor.

"Justice requires an effective deter-

This tough stance against hardened criminals and those convicted of serious crimes has gained for Camacho the monikers "Judge Maximum," "Hanging Judge," "Hammer Joe," or "The Hammer.'

Camacho shrugs this off, saying, "The people deserve a safe community.

He has become known for rejecting lenient plea agreements and for imposing full maximum sentences. He also requires many convicted persons to serve

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'A leadership change like no other' is the top story of 2013

By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO

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No other political leadership change in CNMI history is as symbolic of

peoples' push for transparency in government and serves another reminder that "no one is above the law" as the resignation of former governor Benigno R. Fitial on Feb. 20, days after the House of Representatives impeached him on 18 charges of corruption, felony, and

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OTHER TOR STORIES OF 2012

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A look at some who died in 2013.

SMALL BUSINESS OF THE YEAR Misako Kamata and Kinpanchi Restaurant

By MARK RABAGO

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For 33 years, Kinpachi Restaurant stood at its little nook in the tourist district of Garapan and through all but seven years of its existence, the oldest existing Japanese restaurant on Saipan has had on its helm no other than Misako Kamata

Kamata is known to her staff as a yearround Santa Claus, to the businesses that front the Paseo de Marianas and its

Kinpachi Restaurant owner Misako Kamata has steered the Japanese restaurant through the ups and downs of the local economy the past 26 years.

nearby environs as Ms. Cleanup, and to Saipan Awaodori Team members as their personal travel agent. You don't have to ask them why she has acquired those

Her father, Yoshio, established the landmark restaurant on Sept. 15, 1980. After his death in 1987, Kamata was thrust into a leadership role in the company and has grown the business into one of Saipan's most recognizable and iconic restaurants serving authentic Japanese cuisine.

"The first time I came here I was still a student so I was not allowed to be involved in the business yet. So I just came during vacation," Kamata told Saipan

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2 TUESDAY, DECEMBER 31, 2013 SAIPAN TRIBUNE





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Godfather's Beach Bar \$2 Bud Family Cans \$4 Liquor Specials

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Top Stories of 2013

Still wait-and-see mode on immigration issues in NMI

By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
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Two immigration-related issues were staples in the local media in

2013—U.S. Congress bills that contain a provision allowing a pathway to citizenship for thousands of long-term legal aliens in the CNMI plus a continuing resistance from some individuals, and the Commonwealth's push to extend the Dec. 31, 2014, end of the transitional CW program to allow some 10,000 foreign workers to continue working on the islands.

Delegate Gregorio Kilili C. Sablan's (Ind-MP) efforts have ensured the inclusion of a CNMI-specific provision in S. 744 and H.R. 15, both providing a pathway to citizenship to some 11 million undocumented aliens in America.

This is the farthest that such a push for the CNMI's longterm legal aliens' improved status has gone in years.

The bipartisan S. 744 already passed the U.S. Senate by a vote of 68-32, and is now

pending in the U.S. House.

But a group called Northern Marianas Descent Corp., whose officers and members could be eyeing candidacies in the 2014 elections, wants Congress to reject the CNMI provision that allows improved immigration

status for thousands of foreigners.

A resolution in the CNMI House of Representatives objects to granting a pathway to improved status for these long-term legal aliens, but the CNMI Senate is contemplat-

ing a resolution supporting it. Either way, CNMI immigra-

Sablan

tion has already come under federal control under a law signed in 2008.

While the NMD Corp. continues to drum up support to their cause, Gov. Eloy S. Inos has been echoing the delegate's sentiment that the CNMI provision in sweeping national immigration reform bills does not violate the Covenant that established the political relationship between the U.S. and Northern Marianas.

"It's the right thing to do,"

Saipan Chamber of Commerce president Alex Sablan said of the proposed improved immigration status for long-term alien workers in the CNMI.

Those covered in S. 744 include foreign workers who have been legally in the CNMI

since at least 2003, and those with U.S. citizen children regardless of the age of the children.

After an additional five-year waiting period, these aliens can start applying for U.S. permanent

residence status or "green card," a pathway to U.S. citizenship.

Meanwhile, the CNMI awaits a decision by U.S. Labor Secretary Thomas Perez to extend the Commonwealthonly or CW program beyond Dec. 31, 2014.

Sablan said Perez's decision is expected as early as January 2014.

The CNMI seeks a five-year extension or up to 2019, while it prepares the local workforce to take over the jobs held by foreign workers.

NEWBORN HEARING SCREENING PROGRAM



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Commonwealth Bealthcare Corporation

Printing is funded by the Cooperative Agreement for the Early Hearing Detection and Intervention (EHDI) Tracking, Surveillance and Integration.



Settlement agreement OK'd in Johnson class action suit

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com



After years of litigations both in local and federal courts, what

was once perceived as an impossible court event took place in 2013—a global settlement agreement in a class action that settles the issue on how the NMI Retirement Fund could collect from the CNMI government and eventually pay the retirees and refund the employees' contributions.

The settlement in retiree Betty Johnson's lawsuit against the Fund and the CNMI government that has been litigated for four years in federal court came a few months before the Fund's assets were to be depleted in March 2014.

The settlement also resolved the Fund's collection efforts in connection with its lawsuit filed in 2006 against the CNMI government over the latter's failure to remit required payments. In 2009, Superior Court Associate Judge Kenneth L. Govendo ruled that the government owes the Fund \$282 million in damages.

Now, the CNMI government has to deal with how much and how to pay the multi-milliondollar petitions for attorneys' fees and costs requested by Johnson's battery of lawyers. U.S. District Court for the NMI designated judge Frances Tydingco-Gatewood is set to resolve in January 2014 the remaining issue of attorneys' fees and costs that the CNMI has agreed to pay as part of the settlement.

It was on June 26, on the third and last day of the final settlement conference in Johnson's class action, when the parties reached a then-tentative settlement agreement.

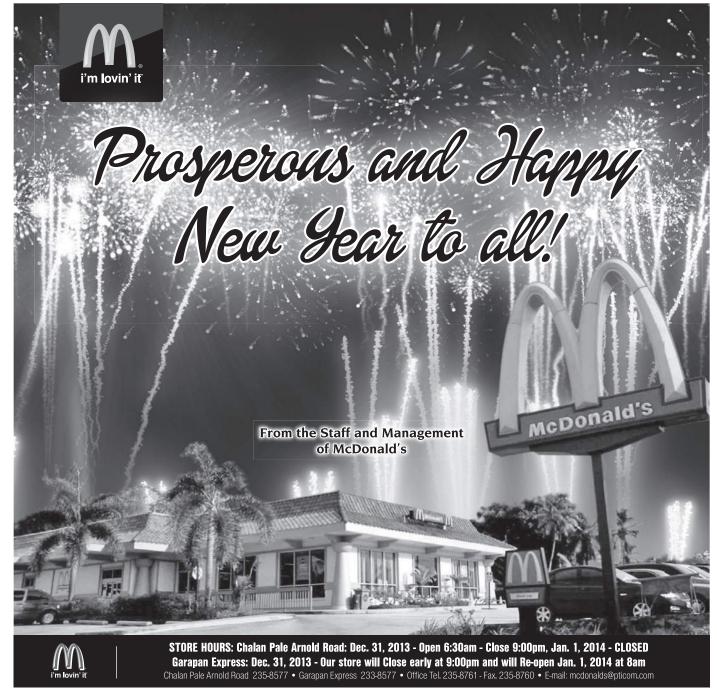
On Aug. 6, Tydingco-Gatewood preliminarily approved the settlement agreement. With that order, the Fund has to pay \$10 million as refunds of contributions to current government employees who have requested to leave the Fund.

The settlement agreement was overwhelmingly supported by retirees. Only 16 opted out, asking to be excluded from the settlement class by the Sept. 20 deadline.

On Sept. 30, Tydingco-Gatewood gave final approval to the settlement agreement after finding it to be "fair, reasonable and adequate."

Under the settlement agreement, the CNMI government agrees to make annual payments that will enable the settlement fund pay to at least 75 percent of class members' benefits.

The judge also entered a con-See SETTLEMENT on Next Page



3 die in Star Marianas crash

By MARK RABAGO

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An island unaccustomed to plane crashes took the brunt of it in the wee

hours of Oct. 6 when a Piper PA-32-300 Cherokee Six aircraft operated by Star Marianas crashed east of the Voices of America Tower on Tinian.

The plane crash claimed the lives of three persons—the plane's pilot, Luis Silva, a 50-something native of Tampico, Tamaulipas, Mexico; and two Chinese tourists, a 29-year-old man and a 26-year-old woman.

Four other passengers of the ill-fated plane survived the crash and were airlifted from the crash site, located about 4 nautical miles from the airport.

The survivors include the 3-year-old daughter of the 29-year-old Chinese male fatality. All four were initially listed in critical but stable condition at the Commonwealth Health Center. They returned to China some 10 days later.

Star Marianas' Shaun Christian said that Star Marianas is fully cooperating with authorities to ascertain the cause of the crash.

The plane crash on Oct. 6 was reportedly the third acci-

dent in three days for the interisland carrier.

On Oct. 4, 2013, a smaller Star Marianas aircraft was said to have made an emergency landing on Broadway Avenue past the Tinian airport heading north. The next day on Oct. 5, a Star Marianas aircraft reportedly fell off a ditch at the Tinian airport. No injuries were reported in the two incidents.

The Oct. 6 tragic plane crash also came barely 11 months since another Star Marianas crash killed one and injured six others.





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From Page 1

Tribune.

She remembers only one Japanese restaurant at the time, the Samurai Restaurant in front of Kanoa Resort.

"Not many buildings, much less a Japanese restaurant, was open when my dad set up Kinpachi Restaurant in 1980. There were no direct flights from Japan yet. After seven years I took over management of the restaurant. It wasn't really hard taking over from my dad because when he was still alive he taught me how to run the business."

The '80s and the '90s were the heyday of the CNMI economy as the influx of Japanese tourisms fueled the boom years. It didn't last, though.

"Business started to decline when the Japanese economic bubble burst in the '90s. It was very hard but luckily we owned our building. We were also lucky that we have nice employees and loyal customers who patronize us whenever

they return to Saipan."

As if things couldn't get worse, the island economy was hit with another blow with Japan Airlines' pullout in 2005, which again drastically reduced Japanese tourist arrivals. "When JAL stopped direct flights we really suffered. I think all businesses in the CNMI suffered, not only us."

After a couple of turbulent years, Kamata said business is finally thriving once again, so much so that she opened a beer garden in 2012 and just recently unveiled a seafood-themed restaurant next to Kinpachi Restaurant.

"Now the economy is better. We're surviving because of Chinese tourists who seem to like Japanese food."

When asked about the secret behind Kinpachi Restaurant's success, Kamata deflects praises to her staff.

"I don't know if it has anything to do with my management style. I guess I'm just lucky that I have good staff and loyal customers. In the company, we treat each other like family from the management down."

Her assistant, Sonia Siwa, and chief cook Loretto Pedoyco attest to the familial atmosphere that exists at Kinpachi Restaurant, which lead to many of its employees staying there for more than 20 years.

"She treats us like family. Most of our staff has been here 13, 15, and 20 or more years. Most staff stay at Kinpachi because of her." said Awa.

"You can't say anything bad about Kinpachi and the owner. I wouldn't stay long here if they don't treat me right. My son already finished two courses [chemistry and nursing] with me just working here. Her only dislikes are those with vices like poker, alcohol, and womanizing. She let's us do our thing and doesn't micromanage," said Pedoyco who along with Awa, are two of the restaurant's 26 employees.

Aside from her business acumen, Kamata is also admired for her many causes to uplift the island community.

Kamata established PDM Promoters, Inc. in December 2005, a non-profit corporation, as a means of giving back to the island.

She said PDM Promoters was first set up to combat the then negative image that Garapan acquired due to the many adult businesses that had cropped up in the area.

"It wasn't nice for familyoriented tourism. It was only catering to the male tourists. We really lost a lot of good customers because of the construction [of the Paseo de Marianas] and the unwholesome atmosphere that this district came to be. We wanted to clean up things and promote this area as a tourist destination for families and try to change its image."

Through PDM Promoters, Kamata also sponsored a monthly cleanup drive of the Paseo de Marianas and its surrounding environs.

"I'm ashamed because when I first came here it was a beautiful island. But nowadays I see a lot trash everywhere. I'm ashamed for tourists who see trash everywhere. I don't want them to leave Saipan with that they take picture together with the trash.'

Aside from Kinpachi Restaurant staff, members of the Saipan Awaodori Team also volunteer in the monthly cleanups.

"We want to educate them about the importance of keeping our island clean because we are a tourist destination and it is the only driver of our economy. This island, our only industry is the tourism industry.'

Another offshoot of the nonprofit group is her establishment and continued sponsorship of the Saipan Awaodori Team.

Now in its sixth year performing on Saipan, the group has had stints in Japan at the Koenji Awaodori Festival in tandem with the Tokyo Tensuiren Group.

"We want kids to do something in their spare time. Also

impression, especially when to promote Japanese culture on Saipan and by sending them to Tokyo and let them experience the culture there," said Kamata, who bankrolls the team's annual trips to Japan, not to mention the uniforms, instruments, and shuttle service of local members.

For Kamata, Saipan is no longer a place to visit only during school vacation. It truly has become home to her.

"All the people I meet are very kind. Even during my first time here. They don't know me but they're very kind. They talk and greet people even if they don't know them. I don't know why my dad established a restaurant here. But he really loved it here. Saipan is home now. I've lived here more than half of my life. People are very nice. You can't stay here long if you're not comfortable."

LEADERSHIP

From Page 1

neglect of duty. Historian Sam McPhetres said it could inspire what he coined the "Pacific Spring," reminiscent of the "Arab Spring" that forced rulers from their power by demonstrations, protests, and civil wars in the Arab world in recent years.

Historian Don Farrell, now working on the last chapter of the Modern History of the Northern Mariana Islands, said the larger picture is the similarity with the administration of former U.S. president Richard Nixon.

"It was certainly significant, demonstrating that no one is above the law and validating the CNMI Constitution... Most of all, the Fitial resignation resonated with 'People Power' as with the Nixon resignation," Farrell told Saipan Tribune yesterday.

Farrell also pointed out the determination of a vocal minority in the 17th House of Representatives—led by then minority leader and now House Speaker Joseph Deleon Guerrero (Ind-Saipan)—who attempted to impeach Fitial in 2012. But their effort was blocked by

the pro-Fitial majority, led then by speaker Eli Cabrera.

"The people responded by making that vocal minority the majority in the 2012 mid-term election. They followed through with their election pledge and reignited the impeachment procedure and continued to push the issue until Fitial resigned. This demonstrates that a vocal minority can achieve objectives and that being in a minority is no excuse for inaction," Farrell said.

He said such an outpouring of "People Power" has not been seen in the CNMI since the people conducted a referendum against casino gambling on Saipan during the first CNMI Legislature.

Fitial stepped down days ahead of the start of his impeachment trial at the Senate—unprecedented in the CNMI or in any other U.S. insular area in the Pacific.

His lieutenant governor, Eloy Songao Inos, became CNMI governor on Feb. 20. Jude Untalan Hofschneider became lieutenant governor, barely weeks after assuming the Senate presidency.

As Farrell pointed out, Nixon came into office in January 1969, with Spiro T. Agnew as his vice president. Agnew was implicated in illegal activities, forcing his resignation. Gerald Ford was chosen to fill the va-

Fitial's first lieutenant governor, Timothy Villagomez, was found guilty of corruption at the Commonwealth Utilities Corp. and was replaced by then secretary of Finance, and now governor. Inos.

When Nixon was forced to resign or face trial before the U.S. Senate, Ford became president and former presidential candidate Nelson Rockefeller became vice president. In the subsequent presidential election, Ford defeated Ronald Reagan for the Republican nomination, but the people of America spoke and elected Democrat Jimmy Carter, Farrell said.

"When Fitial chose to resign rather than face trial before the CNMI Senate, Inos was elevated to governor and Jude Hofschneider, shortly after assuming the office of President of the CNMI Senate, was elevated to lieutenant governor," he added.

Farrell said other CNMI public officials have been found guilty of crimes and removed from office, but the impeachment and succession

in the office of the governor demonstrates not only that "crime does not pay," but also that "the voting public is becoming more mature."

"As Delegate Gregorio Kilili C. Sablan stated, the people are becoming more mature. Voters are choosing candidates based on the issues that really matter, not just family, business or ethnic lovalties." Farrell said.

As with Ford in the 1976 general election, Inos will face the people in the 2014 general

"In both cases," Farrell said, "neither candidate had been elected to executive office."

"The two elections cannot be compared, because in the CNMI, the party structures have changed, perhaps are still changing, whereas party loyalties clearly influenced the outcome in 1976. The American people were so disgusted with Republican Party politics, especially the war in Vietnam, that people reacted by electing a Democrat who was not an attorney or recognized politician," he said.

In the 2014 CNMI general election, Farrell said the people will have the opportunity to grade Inos based on his performance after nearly two years in office.

"With major issues at hand, particularly the proposed military buildup and lingering problems with the Retirement Fund, CUC and CHC [Commonwealth Healthcare Corp.], the next general election will certainly test the maturity of the CNMI voting public," Farrell added.

Although started a year earlier, the impeachment process and Fitial's resignation dwarfed any other local political stories of 2013.

"It will certainly consume one section of the last chapter of the Modern History of the Northern Mariana Islands, due to be published this spring by the Public School System,' Farrell said.

CAMACHO From Page 1

their prison terms day by day without the possibility of parole, early release, work release, weekend release, or other simi-

"The Department of Corrections is not a hotel," Camacho would always remind lawyers who request that their clients be allowed to report to DOC at a certain date.

Shortly after sentencing, he would order the court marshals to bring convicted persons right away to DOC to start their prison terms.

On the administrative aspect, Camacho is well organized. In 2013, he conducted 11 jury trials and 15 bench trials. This is the most for any judge within a year in local court. In fact, for 2014, his calendar is already filled with jury and bench trials all the way to May.

"We anticipate another busy year. It has been an honor and privilege to serve on the bench. Thank you to judges, justices, and court staff for their support," Camacho said.

Camacho used to be a police officer before he became a lawyer. He then served as a law-

When then Superior Court Associate Judge Ramona V. Manglona was confirmed to serve as chief judge of the U.S. District Court for the NMI, then-governor Benigno R. Fitial appointed Camacho to the bench in November 2011.

Some people, particularly lawyers, were at the time skeptical of Camacho's appointment because of his background as a politician. In his first year on the bench, Camacho proved his skeptics and critics wrong.

Among his initial accomplishments were streamlining the jury selection process and reading jury instructions at the beginning of the cases so jurors are well-informed of their duties and responsibilities before the trial begins.

Unlike in the past when trials would take a week or more, trials before Camacho are now in line with the national average of completing trials in three days.

In the past, cases would languish in court for one to three years before going to trial. In his court, parties now have their day in court in about six months.

In his second year, Camacho built upon the foundation he established during his first year on the bench.

Outside the courtrooms, Camacho has been active too. He chairs the CNMI Criminal Justice Information System and chairs the Small Claims Rules Committee. He is also involved with the Junior High School Mock Trial program, and has been sitting as a justice pro temp in the CNMI Supreme Court.

A regular visit to Camacho's chamber shows his office is the only one that is noticeably always open.

"Because it is public office and open to the people," Camacho replied when asked about his "open-door policy."

Camacho's no-nonsense approach against repeat offenders and sexual abusers, his wellorganized dockets, firm rulings, outside courtroom accomplishments, and open policy to the public have gained him the respect of lawyers, law enforcers, and the community.

That is why Judge Joseph Norita Camacho is this year's Saipan Tribune Person of the Year.

SETTLEMENT

From Page 3

sent judgment for \$779 million in case the CNMI government fails to meet its obligations in the settlement agreement.

With the final approval, all Fund assets were transferred and assigned as assets of the settlement fund. The settlement fund is now being administered by the court-appointed trustee, attorney Joyce Tang of the Civille & Tang law firm of Guam.

On Oct. 22, the Fund released over \$40 million in defined benefit plan contributions to applicants, which gave a welcome shot in the arm for the local economy and whose stimulating effect is still being felt up to today.



CHC faced its biggest challenges yet in 2013

By MONETH G. DEPOSA

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In existence for just slightly

Commonwealth Healthcare Corp. faced its biggest challenges in 2013, shaken by oper-

CNMI community pitches in to help Haiyan victims in PH

By MARK RABAGO

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People of the CNMI opened their hearts and their wallets for victims

of Typhoon Haiyan, which ravaged the central Philippines on Nov. 8, leaving more than 6,000 people dead and another 4 million displaced.

The biggest donation from the Commonwealth came from Tan Holdings and CTSI Logistics, which donated a total of \$53,074—representing employee donations that were matched by the company.

Saipan World Resort also gave away a big chunk of money for relief efforts as the Susupe landmark cut a check for \$12,250, which represented money raised by the hotel's own employees (\$2,250) and a donation made by World Resort's corporate office in South Korea (\$10.000)

The United Filipino Or- yet to be provided.

ganization raised a total of \$11,184.64 and the money was turned over to ABS-CBN's Sagip Kapamilya Program. UFO also facilitated the shipment of 401 balikbayan boxes of do-

nated canned goods, clothing,

shoes, housewares, among oth-

ers, that will be coursed through

the Philippine Red Cross. First Hawaiian Bank donated \$100,000 toward the Haiyan relief efforts. A donation of \$50,000 was made to the American Red Cross and another \$50,000 will go to the Filipino

Community Center in Hawaii.

Other businesses, organizations, and agencies that donated to the relief drive include the CNMI Public School System (\$10,000), Bank of Guam (\$10,000), Joeten & Daidai Foundation (\$10,000), Northern Marianas Badminton Association (\$2,000), Tinian Marianas Lions Club (\$1,800), and MDX Amateur Radio Club (\$500). Others also donated money and in-kind items but figures have

Freedom Air's bankruptcy suit catches CPA flat-footed

By MONETH G. DEPOSA

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The bankruptcy case filed by one of its longest tenants, Freedom

Air, caught the Commonwealth Ports Authority by surprise when the company formally filed for Chapter 11 protection on Sept. 30, just days after the CPA board of directors decided to give it a 90-day reprieve on its debt.

The local carrier filed the Chapter 11 petition before the U.S. Bankruptcy Court for the District of Guam on Sept. 30. It listed an estimated 50 to 99 creditors and assets of about \$1 million to \$10 million, equivalent to its declared estimated liabilities. Under Chapter 11, Freedom Air has 120 days to reorganize itself and after four months, it is expected that the CPA board will render a new decision.

CPA first issued a 30-day termination notice to Freedom Air in August as a result of the company's unpaid obligations to CPA totaling \$1.23 million. The \$1.23 million represents unpaid obligations for both lease agreement and airline use agreement.

Based on this decision, the company was supposed to vacate airport premises on three islands by Sept. 19. But a day before this deadline, the CPA board issued a new order—this time providing the company a 90-day reprieve.

Prior to the CPA board's decision in August, the ports authority had already given several chances for the Freedom Air to rectify its long overdue accounts. In fact, several notices of default, termination and promissory notes were issued to the company since 2011, a demonstration of the opportunities extended by the ports authority to the local carrier.

On Sept. 24, 2012, CPA served the company its first notice of termination of promissory notes, lease agreements and airline use agreement, and notice to vacate premises. Despite this notice to terminate and vacate, an extension was granted to Freedom Air, yet again, to cure the defaults.

In June, Freedom Air officials led by owner and founder Joaquin Flores appeared before the board seeking forbearance on its outstanding account and arrears. The Legislative Delegation also appealed to the board in support of the airline's plight.

Because of the Chapter 11 bankruptcy, it's status quo for Freedom Air. As for CPA, no action can be taken on the issue until the court rules with finality on the case.

over a year, the newly created ational challenges that included personal and political differences between and among the top management and its board of trustees.

Just at the start of the year, the corporation's first CEO, Juan N. Babauta, was put in the limelight following the board of trustees' expression of dissatisfaction with his performance the same board that selected and approved his \$96,000 contract as the organization's chief executive officer.

The flames of controversy got further fanned when a confidential survey was done among CHCC personnel on Saipan, Tinian, and Rota in February, with the objective of getting the personnel's input on the CEO's evaluation.

A host of issues were raised against Babauta, including unjustified salary increases for se-

lected individuals; nonremittance of personnel allotments; the continued hiring of non-essential staff despite an

emergency reduction-in-force policy; and the lack of an effective "linkage" from the management to the board, among other concerns.

On March 21, the board of trustees voted not to renew Babauta's contract, which was supposed to expire on July 9. The board later rescinded its first decision and just terminated his contract effective April 30. Esther Muña, the hospital's chief operating officer, was named his successor.

public hospital with the high turnover rate of doctors and

nurses, losing 12 physicians in a span of 12 STORIES months-without immediate replacements. At one point, CHCC

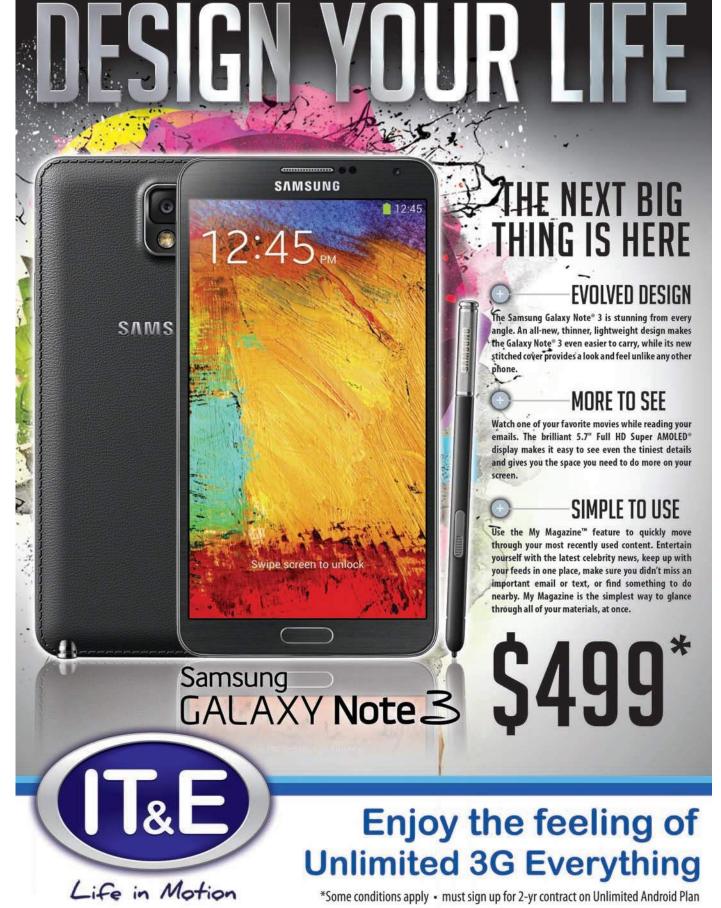
had only 21 doctors for three islands and a nursing workforce that went down to just 130.

Coupled with its financial situation, the corporation also faced difficulties in addressing the serious deficiencies found by the U.S. Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, which sanctioned the public hospital with three immediate jeopardy statuses during a September 2012 survey visit.

The corporation has already submitted its corrective plans

Challenges continued at the for the hospital but the threat of decertification of CHC's Condition of Participation with CMMS has yet to go away pending the final decision of the federal agency.

Also notable in 2013 was the entry of various assistance-both local and federal—to help resolve the deficiencies uncovered at the hospital. Among the important help received by CHCC this year is the "rescue mission" by the U.S. Commissioned Corp that provided logistics and technical experts who stayed at CHC for 90 days. The \$3 million loan sought from the Marianas Public Land Trust was also realized as well as the CIP monies for important hospital equipment and tools.



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Senator's conviction puts the Constitution to the test

TOP STORIES OF

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Another CNMI senator was convicted while in office in

2013, this time over smuggling endangered fruit bats from Rota to Saipan. But the story did not end with Juan M. Ayuyu's conviction or his still pending sentencing. It was just the beginning of a saga that reached the CNMI Supreme Court to determine who is going to fill his vacated Senate seat.

Ayuyu, 48, resigned as a member of the 18th Senate effective Oct. 1, 2013, pending his court sentencing.

He faces 33 to 41 months constitutional system of govin prison, which would be completed long after his supposed term as a senator ends in January 2015.

In the end, a Supreme Court ruling on a certified question paved the way for the unsuccessful candidate in the 2012 elections—and not in the 2009 polls—to be appointed to serve the remainder of Ayuyu's term.

Thus, former Senate president Paul A. Manglona (Ind-Rota) returned to the CNMI Senate which, for quite some time, has not had a complete nine members.

"It is great to be part of the constitutional process and I, for one, would like to note for the record that the NMI ernment with written rules of law to fill vacancies and an independent Judiciary to interpret and define ambiguous terms is very much alive and well in the Commonwealth today," Lt. Gov. Jude U. Hofschneider said when he, as acting governor, formally appointed Manglona on the heels of the court ruling.

The same court decision also prompted the Inos administration to clarify that Sen. Joaquin Borja's (Ind-Tinian) appointment was based on the results of the 2012 race rather than on the 2009 elections. Borja was appointed to serve the remainder of former Senate president and now Lt. Gov. Jude U. Hofschneider's term.

The CNMI Supreme Court said the term "last election" in Article 2, Section 9 of the CNMI Constitution refers to the most recent expression of the electorate.

The high court addressed the certified question of who the governor must appoint following a vacancy in the Senate with less than half a term remaining because of Ayuyu's resignation as Rota senator.

This came months after Attorney General Joey Patrick San Nicolas, in a March 15, 2013, legal opinion, said if Ayuyu is convicted and a vacancy in the Senate exists, that vacancy will be filled by Joey Anthony Quitugua. The AG later welcomed the court ruling.

Dramatic twists and turns characterize NMC's 2013

By MONETH G. DEPOSA moneth_deposa@saipantribune.com

One say safely 2013 that was a dramatic year

for the Northern Marianas College, marred not only by challenges but also controversies that continue to threaten the institution's stability.

The very first week of January 2013 saw the Board of Regents making a determination that the faculty's noconfidence vote against NMC president Dr. Sharon Y. Hart in December 2012 was "inval-

id." The board also described the evidence report turned in for board review and assessment as "unsubstantiated." Among the allegations raised against Hart were abuse of power; excessive

travels; unwarranted personal reimbursements; plagiarism; and micromanagement—all found unsupported by factual details.

Also in February this year, the college was placed under severe sanction by its accrediting commission, which slapped the institution with a show-cause status on its accreditation—the fourth issued to NMC after 2008, 2010, and 2011. This came about after the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges determined that the college has been noncompliant with accreditation standards and eligibility requirements. The college has already submitted two reports to the ACCJC outlining the changes that have been implemented in response to commission concerns.

A visiting team from the commission was on island in October to verify the reports. A recommendation to the full

commission is due in time for the January assembly of the ACCJC. The fate of NMC's accreditation is expected to be known in early February, according to officials.

The Board of Regents voted in May to renew Hart's contract for another two years with the same terms and conditions, plus a \$20,000 bonus. The contract was formally signed last week by board chair Frank Rabauliman and Hart.

Besides its accreditation, NMC was also shaken this year when the U.S. Department of Education ruled to stop providing the institution

Title IV grants after finding out that the college is accredited by two commission bodies, which is against USDOE regulations.

Through Gov. Elov S. Inos' appeal, along with

the Legislature and the college itself, the USDOE was convinced in August to extend the funding assistance for another 18 months until NMC remedies the situation and is placed under only one accreditation body.

USDOE also ruled that NMC need not return the federal grants used for the college's baccalaureate program. Title IV funds utilized by NMC's School of Education for 13 years total \$7.097 million.

Also this year, some faculty members were issued non-renewal notice of their employment contracts while some were terminated from their jobs-mostly as result of the new minimum qualification policy set for faculty members. Those who were not renewed included Larry Lee, Kyle Podsweiski, Romeo Cuelar, and Wil Maui. Despite appeals, the board has affirmed the management's decision.

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Cleanup at Pau Pau Beach on Sat.

The Division of Environmental Quality's Cleanup Brigade will be at it again picking up trash at Pau Pau Beach this Saturday, Jan. 4, 2014, at 8am.

If you would like to volunteer, meet the DEQ representatives on Saturday at the Pau Pau Beach parking lot at 8am. Volunteers will split into groups and clean until 10am and break for drinks and then continue, if needed.

This month, outstanding brigade volunteers who participated in at least 10 monthly cleanups will receive a brigade cap and those who participated in at least three cleanups will receive a brigade t-shirt.

Last month's Coral Ocean Beach Cleanup was successful with 36 volunteers participating. Thanks to students from Tanapag Elementary, Dandan Elementary, Garapan Elementary, San Vicente Elementary, Hopwood Jr. High, Saipan Southern High/YEA Club, Emerson Network Power, KIEC, Coral Ocean Point, and other volunteers, about 160 lbs of marine debris was removed from the beach and properly disposed of.

For more information about volunteering, contact the DEQ office at 664-8500/1. (DEO)



festival surpasses even that of winning in London or New York, which is why most Japanese High School bands focus solely on winning their prefecture's annual contest, rather than entering international ones," he shared.

According to DeWitt, the invitation to perform and compete in Asia is the probably the most remarkable request the band members have ever received, given the rarity of foreign ensembles meeting their strict qualification requirements. For example, the Manta Band had to successfully pass an audition process to perform not only in the adjudicated event, but also for concerts during which no judging will take place.

"Whether or not we can muster the financial resources in time to make this dream a reality, being invited to the 'Super Bowl' of high school band

festival surpasses even that of winning in London or New York, which is why most Japa- contests nevertheless represents the crowning achievement of 2013!" he said.

Saipan Tribune was told that in addition to the 250-plus students enrolled in the beginning course, intermediate, advanced, and advanced II courses this school year, an explosion of smaller ensembles have emerged to augment the types of musical experiences available to these talented kids. There are numerous trios, quartets, and quintets featuring flutes, clarinets, saxes, trumpets, low brass, percussion, and blends of several instruments including oboe and bassoon.

For those who don't know, the Mantas have even two rock bands. These small groups and individual soloists can be found performing at local establishments like Coffee and Jazz, The Coffee House, DFS, the Volcano Bar, etc. on a regular basis.

An uninterrupted streak of successes for Manta Band

By MONETH G. DEPOSA moneth_deposa@saipantribune.com



The year 2013 cians who h music progratinterrupted cade. As the streak of successes for the be prouder of

Manta Ray Band, considered the island's most popular music group composed of talented junior and senior students of Saipan Southern High School.

Its musical director and conductor, William DeWitt, couldn't be more proud of the accomplishments they've garnered in remarkable performances both here and abroad—bringing honor and prestige to the Public School System and the Commonwealth as a whole.

Just in 2013, Manta Band gave a dazzling performance at the 9th Annual Tumon Bay Music Festival where it earned 17 gold medals for individuals, small ensemble, and full ensemble performances. Since 2008, when the band made its debut at the competitive festival, the Manta Band has never been bested by another group in the high school band category, including at Carnegie Hall and the London Olympics. For two consecutive performance years in the competition, it was the recipient of the festival's Sweepstakes Trophy—the highest recognition bestowed to a participant.

Since 2002, SSHS has been at the forefront of music education, with a fine arts focus as one of the core pillars of its mission. DeWitt said they have been blessed with the finest of students, parents, administrators, and teachers as they pursue a path of excellence, not just in the arts, but in the full spectrum of academic endeavors.

"It truly is an honor to rep-

resent the CNMI, our Southern High community, and the thousands of young student musicians who have enrolled in our music program over the past decade. As the leader and founder of the Manta Band, I couldn't be prouder of their accomplishments in music, academics, and life!" said DeWitt.

This year, the band's ensembles have performed at numerous local events, including the PSS Music Festival, Memorial and Veterans Day ceremonies, concerts at the American Memorial Park, Garapan Street Market, Paseo de Marianas, at Saipan Community School, various hotels, government offices including the Judiciary and Executive branches, as well special performances for the island's elderly at the Aging Center. The Manta Ray Band, for many years now, has also been playing for the Liberation Day Parade.

"School year 2013 saw the continuation of an uninterrupted streak of successes for the Manta Band. Our ensembles have performed at numerous events and also competed at the 9th annual Tumon Bay Music Festival, adding to an impressive collection of overall awards and command performances, earning 17 golds in 2013 alone for individual, small ensemble, and full ensemble performances," said DeWitt.

This year, the Manta Band is preparing for a monumental opportunity to compete in Japan and Korea against high school bands that are widely considered to be the world's elite. The competition at this particular festival in Shizuoka is actually going to be tougher than anywhere the Manta Band has traveled thus far, according to DeWitt.

"The prestige associated with performing well at a Japanese



COMMUNITY BRIEFS

Transfer Station, Marpi landfill schedule

In observance of New Year's Day, Wednesday, Jan. 1, 2014, the Lower Base transfer station and the Marpi landfill will be closed all day. Regular schedule will resume on Thursday, Jan. 2, 2014 through Saturday, Jan. 4, 2014, from 7:30am to 11:30am, and 12:30pm to 4pm. Happy New Year! (*PR*)

Sobriety checkpoints today

The Department of Public Safety's Traffic Section will be conducting sobriety checkpoints today, Dec. 31, 2013

- 5pm to 6:15pm: Beach Road Chalan Piao in front of Hopwood Jr. High School on the southbound lane.
 - 9:30pm to 10:45pm: Cha-

lan Monsignor Guerrero, Chalan Kiya by the CUC Waterloo on the southbound lane.

■ 11:30pm-12:45am: Chalan Pale Arnold, Gualo Rai in front of Han's Tire Shop on the north-bound lane.

Traffic officers along with patrol officers will also be conducting highway interdiction, saturation patrol, aggressive drivers interdiction, and speed enforcement. For more information, contact Sgt. Anthony Macaranas at (670) 483-5818. (**DPS**)

Family grief support meeting on Jan. 2

A group that is in the process of forming a Compassionate Friends chapter on Saipan will be holding their monthly grief support meeting on Thursday, Jan. 2, from 6pm to 7:30pm, in the NMPASI conference room on Middle Road, in Gualo Rai.

For more information, call Jill Derickson at 287-5337 or e-mail jilld@pticom.com. To learn more about The Compassionate Friends, visit their website at www.compassionatefriends.org (PR)

atefriends.org. (PR) for vi

verification.

BIRTHDAY

SHOUTOUT

Happy birthday to my dearest mom, Cathy Reyes! You're the inspiration of my life, without you I'll be incomplete. I love you a whole bunch! Greetings comr from your loving daughter, Quianny Ann R. Camacho.

Dog found

A Good Samaritan found a dog wandering along Tun Juaquin Doi Road in As Lito around 5pm to 6pm Sunday night. The owner of the dog should call 234-2316 and bring a photo of the lost dog for verification.



December 31, 2005

Retirees get checks, govt meets shortfall

Allaying fears of a blue New Year among retirees, the financially distressed government managed to remit the needed funds to meet the \$2.3 million pension obligations to retirees yesterday. NMI Fund administrator Karl T. Reyes said the Department of Finance paid a total of \$875,000 in employer contributions, which the Fund used to meet its pension payment. He said that \$375,000 was remitted Thursday and the balance of \$500,000 got in yesterday. On top of this, the department also paid \$121,000 for the health insurance program, Reyes said.

Safe haven regs withdrawn

The Attorney General's Office withdrew yesterday the proposed safe haven regulations after the project received overwhelming opposition at the public hearing Thursday evening. Deputy Attorney General Clyde Lemons Jr. issued a public notice saying that the proposed regulation would be withdrawn until further notice. He added, though, that the AGO, as provided by law, would fully consider all written and oral submissions regarding the proposed Safe Haven Entry Permit regulation. "Given the volume of the written submissions and the length of the public hearing held on Dec. 29, 2005 (said hearing being recorded), the Attorney General's Office needs time to comply with said provisions of the law," said Lemons. The Multi-Purpose Center was packed Thursday night, with a huge number of local residents opposing the project.

December 31, 2006

NMC moves kilns to new home

The Northern Marianas College was once more at the receiving end of the goodwill shown by a local company that helped it move its kilns used for ceramics classes to a new building. "With the college vacating its Fina Sisu rental units, one of the biggest and heaviest problems we faced was how to move the kilns being used in the ceramics classes from the Fina Sisu housing units to their new home in Building T on the upper campus," said NMC acting president Danny Wyatt. Seafix came to the college's rescue, providing both manpower and the vehicle with a boom to lift the two kilns from their Fina Sisu sites to the new location. Operators Robert Lozalo and Tommy Steven joined the college's maintenance workers in moving the kilns.

Blast Off at GIG tonight

GIG Discotheque meets the New Year with a bang by presenting a livewire party dubbed "Blast Off" catering to party people of various nationalities on Saipan. Doors will open at 9:00 in the evening and beats will continue slammin until 4am. To provide entertainment to the crowd, former winners of the GIG sponsored competitions will perform namely: Paul Martin, 2006 Lipsync champion; Froilan de Leon, 2005 Disco Karaoke champion; and Melvin Morales, Pinoy Idol champion. Resident DJs of GIG—DJ Sly and Mixmaster Romeo—will start the spinning rampage in the early evening while DJ June Bugg from Guam will hit the deck at 12:00 midnight. A female exotic dancer will spice it up at 2am.

December 31, 2007

Workers scrambling to beat transfer deadline

Many alien workers, employers and their agents were scrambling at the Department of Labor office in San Antonio Friday to meet the Dec. 31 deadline to file consensual transfer applications. There are now over 1,000 consensual transfer applications for this month alone, according to Labor Administrative Hearing Office administrator Rose Ada-Hocog. "This entire week the department was filled with a lot of people. They are scrambling to meet the deadline," said Ada-Hocog.

Lawmakers mull lawsuit against Fund over suspension of benefits

Lawmakers are mulling a lawsuit to contest the NMI Retirement Fund's decision to stop processing retirement benefits. Speaker Oscar M. Babauta said that attorneys at the House of Representatives are preparing legal action against the Fund board of trustees. "We will seek a TRO [temporary restraining order] against the Retirement Fund. We feel that the board's action has no bearing pursuant to the various statutes and the Constitution," Babauta said. The House is expected to formalize its intent by adopting a resolution on Thursday, Jan. 3, 2008. On Nov. 20, 2007, the Fund board of trustees adopted a resolution to stop processing members' benefits.



A look at some who passed away in 2013

By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO and MONETH G. DEPOSA

FRANK G. CEPEDA

Vietnam War veteran and former representative Frank Guerrero Cepeda passed away on Aug. 15 at the age of 71. Two months later, his wife of 52 years, Fe, followed him.

A proud retired sergeant major from the Green Beret, Cepeda served as a member of the CNMI House of Representatives, became special assistant for military and veterans' affairs, a JROTC program manager, and a military science instructor.

Cepeda, in seeking election for another government post in 2005, said returning the "trust in our elected leaders" should always be a priority.

"We must make sure that people's morale is restored," he added.

LUIS P. CRISOSTIMO

After a long but valiant fight with throat cancer, former four-term senator Luis Palacios Crisostimo passed away on June 15 in Las Vegas, Nevada, at the age of 52.

Months prior to his passing, he asked his former colleagues to allow him to go back to the Senate "one last time," and senators granted that wish on June 28 when his remains were brought to the Senate for a moving, well-attended memorial tribute.

"He walked the halls and chambers of this legislative house with dignity and respect... His voice may not be loud, but his actions and excellence spoke loudly of him. His name is appended into the history book of our Commonwealth. He is now at peace, and we shall, someday, be reunited," Rep. Ray Tebuteb (Ind-Saipan) said at the memorial tribute, a day before Crisostimo's funeral.

BERNARD V. HOFSCHNEIDER

Bernard Arthur Villagomez Hofschneider, one of the Marianas Political Status Commission negotiators that hammered out the Covenant to pave the way for the islands to join the American political family, passed away on Oct. 27 this year. He was 74.

"He's been a longtime public servant, leader, and a devout Catholic. That's how I would want the CNMI to remember him... He's well-mannered, very articulate and intelligent," one of his youngest nephews, Lt. Gov. Jude U. Hofschneider,

Bernard V. Hofschneider, who hails from Tinian, is survived by his wife, Guadalupe "Lupe" DLG Reves Hofschneider, and children.

JACINTO B. MENDIOLA

The former village commis-

cinto B. Mendiola, passed away on Oct. 25. He was 85 years old. The late commissioner served with distinction in various capacities during the Naval Administration, the Trust Territory, and the CNMI government for more than four decades. Mendiola was honored for his valuable contributions to the improvement of the Municipality of Saipan.

JUAN B. TUDELA

Former two-term Saipan mayor Juan Borja Tudela passed away on Feb. 1 at a Hawaii hospital after he was diagnosed with stomach cancer. His passing was described as a "deep loss" for the CNMI. He was 77.

"As a native son of the Commonwealth, Mayor Tudela lived a life dedicated to public service through numerous key positions in both the trust territory and Commonwealth governments," former governor Benigno R. Fitial said in a statement on Tudela's passing.

Besides serving as a Saipan mayor, Tudela was also a member of the House of Representatives, a Board of Education member, village commissioner and scoutmaster with the Garapan Boy Scouts. He was instrumental in bringing in Japanese students through the NMI-Japan Cultural Exchange programs where hundreds of students were given the opportunity to travel in the CNMI and Japan.

ESCOLASTICA B. TUDELA-CABRERA

Escolastica B. Tudela-Cabrera, the first female member of the Saipan Municipal Council in 1963 and an active civic leader in the community, passed away on Oct. 21 at the age of 83. Dubbed as the "champion of common causes" beneficial to the CNMI, she was recognized for her outstanding public service that contributed to the progress of the islands.

Tudela-Cabrera was the first captain of the "America Needs Fatima Rosary Rally" and held various posts in community and school associations and had participated in the White House conference on aging. She was also the first female grand marshal of the Saipan Liberation Day festivities. The late civic leader was also credited for opening various employment opportunities to the island people by opening different enterprises on Saipan.

JOSE P SAN NICOLAS

Jose P. San Nicolas, a former mayor of the Municipality of Tinian, died on June 28 in the Philippines after undergoing a heart operation. San Nicolas, the father of former senator Henry San Nicolas, has been battling against his illness for years until he was taken to a

sioner for Chalan Kanoa, Ja- Manila hospital for the last Palacios died of pancreatic trade institute in the Common- employment opportunities, surgery, which he failed to survive. The 66-year-old former chief executive officer served his island for one term

> in 2006. He was buried at the San Jose Cemetery on Tinian on July 6. San Nicolas, better known as "Josen Chandia,"

was born on Nov. 15, 1946.

ROMAN S. PALACIOS

Former Commonwealth Ports Authority board chair Roman S. Palacios passed away on Oct. 10 after battling cancer for many years. He was 67 years old. Known for his generosity and quick wit,

cancer. He was the eldest of eight children of the late Jesus Muña Palacios and Anunciasion Sablan Palacios. Ro-

> man Palacios was married to Patricia Tenorio, whose family owns Joeten Enterprises, Inc. He grew up in Chalan

Kanoa and went to school on Saipan before going to high school in Guam. He finished college at the University of Guam and went to work for Saipan Stevedore Co.

ANTHONY PELLEGRINO

A well-known businessman and founder of the first ever wealth, Anthony Pellegrino died of multiple health ailments on June 2 at the Commonwealth Health Center. Pellegrino, 82, owned firms such as Saipan Sea Ventures, Aquaculture, Saipan Ice Co., and Northern Marianas Trade Institute, among others. In his passing, the late businessman was accorded numerous citations in recognition of his valuable contributions to the CNMI.

Pellegrino was once awarded the Saipan Chamber of Commerce's Businessman of the Year for his notable works and assistance to the community by establishing various

including the creation of the Northern Marianas Trade Institute, seen as key to developing the NMI's workforce. He was also selected in 2009 as the Saipan Tribune's Person of the Year and where he wrote a weekly column.

Pellegrino was also the founding president of the CNMI's Library Friends, a group dedicated in raising monies for the public library's programs and activities. Prior to his passing, he was also able to establish the Arctic Circle to help farmers and ranchers better promote their produce outside of the Commonwealth.



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Opinion



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EDITORIAL

Do-nothing Congress II: It's not a compliment

t's official: The Republican-controlled House and the Democrat-controlled Senate agreed on so few issues this year, Congress is on pace to pass the fewest bills in a two-year term since World War II. Pundits have compared the current occupants of Capitol Hill unfavorably to the infamous "Do-Nothing Congress" of 1947-48, which was a dynamo in comparison. Lawmakers passed 1,729 bills in that two-year term, compared to 58 in the first year of this one. Unless something changes dramatically in the second half of the 113th Congress, it will be the least productive in modern memory.

Counting the number of bills that make it into law, however, is only one way to judge lawmakers, and not always the most meaningful. Adding 50 new wrinkles to the tax code, for instance, would be far less valuable than enacting a single comprehensive overhaul. And as important as it may be to keep federal law up to date, so too is the work congressional committees do to oversee the executive branch and draw attention to emerging national issues.

Yet the paltry number of bill signings coincides with a stunning inability to do the basic job of governance, let alone tackle bigger and more divisive issues. The legislative branch's most fundamental task is to authorize federal programs and appropriate money each year for the agencies to carry them out. This year, not only could lawmakers not get most of the spending bills through their own chambers, they couldn't agree on a stopgap bill to keep the government open, leading to a costly 16-day shutdown.

For most of the session, Republicans and Democrats have acted like an embittered couple that stopped speaking to each other years ago. The sole exception was the recent budget deal struck by the leaders of the House and Senate budget committees, Rep. Paul D. Ryan, R-Wis., and Sen. Patty Murray, D-Wash. The deal set a discretionary spending limit for fiscal 2014 that split the difference between the two chambers' proposals, while cutting mandatory spending and raising fees enough to more than offset the cost. That sort of compromise, so exceptional today, was once routine in Washington.

The budget agreement should make it easier for Congress to pass bills in January to keep the government open after its temporary funding expires, but there's still a real possibility for lawmakers to foul things up. That, after all, is what happened in October, when House Republicans insisted on attaching a toxic rider—a provision to "defund Obamacare"—to what should have been a non-controversial stopgap spending bill.

A modestly productive Congress would handle both of those fiscal tasks without drama, then make at least incremental progress on immigration, the sluggish economy, healthcare costs and other major issues. If last year is any guide, this Congress will do none of those things. And if that's how its term concludes, it will be a most unproductive Congress regardless of how many other bills it passes.

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Facing the year that will be

s all moving forward entails, one often engages in the activity of deconstruction to clear the debris from previous engagements. So we do so on this sunny day off Kowloon Bay in the now Special Administrative Region of Hong Kong, called *Xianggang* in Mandarin, and *Hoeng Gong Zai* in Cantonese.

We are bit early for a 50th anniversary of an August landing in Kowloon in 1965. I just turned 20 when I waved my mother goodbye while she stood on Manila South Harbor's wharf while I sailed out on board SS *President Wilson* for a 20-day journey to San Francisco across the Pacific, on to a three-year theology stint in Kentucky. Kowloon was first stop and my first viewing of Sinoland, then we overnighted in famed Yokohama lights that offered a rail trip to Ginza. A few waves later, we got lei'd without getting Maui'd in Honolulu, and a few foghorns later, I rose early at dawn to weather the bay's morning mist for a view of the Golden Gate bridge.

HK's Victoria Peak then was shrouded by low-lying clouds while Kowloon teemed with coolies pulling their rickshaws, the living embodiment of many Hollywood views. I can now add Susie Wong of *Wan chai* but at the time, our prurient interest was not whetted yet. We just barely crossed over from the terrain of innocence, if not the blissful world of ignorance.

But yesterday is best left to John Lennon's lyrics. Tomorrow is where I focus my gaze. A colleague from Canada decided to do a couple of touring days in HK headed for Pea Eye. I am the designated guide. I was forthright about HK's tongue primarily Cantonese (not that I have any Mandarin comprehension to brag about) but I am the local security blanket and I am only too willing to play the role.

I booked a leisurely 36-hour train ride from Shenyang earlier before retirement was hurriedly announced so I reluctantly cancelled after shifting quickly to the hassle mode. My colleague would not take "no" for an answer. A plane ticket showed up in my email so now I am basking in Kowloon's sunshine for a couple of days.

We will skip the seat with the view on famed double-decker buses. World class city HK is no different from London, Paris, Singapore, Tokyo and New York. It is the Year-that-Will-Be of 2014 that grabs my attention and pulls my mind before I watch the night's fireworks, holding a *mai tai* listening to the twitter of Ilonggo and Iloko sounds. My tourist was Davao raised.

The awe and wonder about tomorrow (that's my next 17 years) is its openness. One is free to decide to give it form and shape without feeling determined by the lingering luggage of the past. Given our sudden transition state, this reality has gotten more stark than usual. I am in fact wobbly on the dance floor of transparent nothingness sans the familiar lingering steam of choices previously made. I used the term tabula rasa before but I did not fully understand its exis-

By JAIME VERGARA

Special to the Saipan Tribune

Jaime Vergara is a resident of Saipan teaching at the Shenyang Aerospace University in China. His email is pinoypanda2031@ aol.com.



tential meaning until now.

There is the matter of economic tyranny of which retirement is supposed to be salve, a balsam and a balm, an appeasing cream and lotion. We know of but do not share the anxiety of its anticipation nor the despair that characterizes its uncertainties; I just hunker down to chart a new course in the direction of an unknown but unsurprisingly welcoming future.

I cosigned a hefty bank loan back in Shenyang to pay for a dwelling under construction scheduled to be turned over in June/July and to be habitable for October occupancy. Many friends quake with regrets over the limits imposed by similar situations. I explore its possibilities. That is what's so inviting about tomorrow.

Having been Atlantic, Gulf, Pacific, and midland prairie focused in the last 50 years, I now bellow "westward ho" from China's northeast, like the way American wagon train pioneers used to holler. There is that inviting boat ride from Dalian via NoKor Chongjin port to Vladivostok, then traverse on a trans-Siberian train ride through the Far East's *khrebets* via Mongolian Ulan Ude and interracial Irkutsk onward to Europe's Moscow and St. Petersburg before grabbing a 15-30 day Euro pass from Scandinavia to south inland, heading Turkey and Greece, across the southern shores of the Mediterranean back up north of Atlantic coast EU that can easily terminate in the British Isles, spending a day or two at each stop. Or, the trek to Kasgar and Tashkent! The good thing about dreaming is that it is free, and one can always change one's mind!

How to pay for the gig? Yo, you still in that rut!

Many are stuck in their recriminations against the past and fearful acquiescence to the fashionable modes of the future, manipulated and promoted by the guys and dolls who inhabit the penthouses of HK's skyline and their cousins in other world cities. We shall refrain from sashaying to their tune!

For now, it is the din of nitrate bangers (HK-banned but tell that to the Chinese) initially meant to tame wild dragons (the Chiang Jiang/Yangtze and the Huanghe/Yellow mighty rivers are depicted as dragons) that will accompany our vigil tonight. My guest brought a familiar Glenfiddich of the Scottish highland. Two downs from a three-finger tumbler will do me just right. Happy New Year!

EDITORIAL POLICY

Letters to the editor must include the NAME, VILLAGE ADDRESS, and CONTACT NUMBER of the contributor. Letters that do not have these information will immediately be trashed. Contributions consisting of 500 words or less have more chances of getting published. The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to publish a contribution or not; the right to edit submissions for length, accuracy, and clarity; and the right to publish price or other media formation. Submissions may be continued as a length of the contribution. Submissions may be continued as a length of the contribution.

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Esperansa gi 2014

By JOHN S. DELROSARIO JR.

Special to the Saipan Tribune

John DelRosario Jr. is a former publisher of the Saipan Tribune and a former secretary of the Department of Public Lands.



aseha mala`et paladat-ta pinadese gi hiniyuñg este na sakan, tanae` animu ginagau bendision yan fitme na sensian esperansa ginen i Nanalibreta puede lamauleg i 2014 na sakan.

Makat na hogsu' obligasion tafafana'. Taya' lokue' fina' madog 'nai siña ta ekspaye problemata soluke satton na kinimite gi satbasion pinadesen linahyan. Tana' siña mohon? Debi u guaha fitme na kabesiyun (leadership) gi hegsu' I Deni'.

Yangin para ta repite mañan kadu' tatuñgu' i tita tuñgu' pues mansulon hit ta'lu tate gi aplacha' na fache' diskuidu. Mas te'ug siempre pinadesen publiku gi halom este na diskuidu.

Kumu mañehan ñaihon hamyu ya in` atan fotmat i asuntu siha siempre in` lie` luserun hinimidde na hagas gi sagaña man-ninanañgga hamyu deste alacha siha na sakan.

Puede ti in` sedi lumachog sensian tailaye na finatane`. Ta`lun bumisita haf` na man-gaige hamyu guennau na puesto yan sustansian in` chili` na huramientu.

Ti Komprendiyun

Para i dikiki` tano`ta yan manadan problemaña, guaha `nai dumes-

kansa-yu' gi silensiu na patte gi hinasoghu para bai' lie' manu na koyentura gagaddon. Ti mapot ma-oppe i kuestion. Lau kase gaige i chinatsaga gi huegon un' bachet ni pumipipet otru bachet.

Yangin mampos makat i asuntu ya man-diniñgu hamyu, guaha minapotña mamaisen ayudu para ta dañae' umakude haf' debi u machogue? Na ti maulegña mamaisen ke linaisen? Mañgge sensian himidde gi haf' fafayimu yan ti fafayimu? Kau konfotmeña hau mama' sabiu ke un' aligau ausiliu para un' mueba linala' linahyan?

Puntu: Linala` publiku mamatmos gi fache` miserapble pot diskuidun chatkabayeru gi hegsu` I Deni`. Ti mapot este na kuentas makatkula piot sa` gaige ha` gi me`nan guieñg niha. Ya ti u mahñau siempre in` fan man-nae` kuenta haf` siha in` petsige para adelantun linala` i tautau ni in` represesenta gi hegsu` I Deni`--administrasion yan lehislatura.

Sustansian Gobietnu

Si Presidente Abraham Lincoln ha esplika gi kadada` na manera haf` sustansian gobietnu. Este na sistema "pot i tautau, ginen i tautau, yan para i tautau". Hafa i puntu?

Sottan ñaihon dos asuntu gi punta ya un' kula i "ginen i tautau" para un' komprende sustansian puestomu gi offisinan publiku. Siempre un' lie' yan un' nina' humidde haf' na pinega guennau ni tautau. Pot siha na gaige hau guennau gi hilu esperansa na siña un' adelanta kualidat linala' niha. Kau un' chogue ennau na tinagu' i tautau ni un' represesenta?

Muñga mana` chagu` i asuntu ni hagas lumauya gi papa` guieñg miyu: ekonomia. Hafa fuera ke chanseru na priniponen casino otru che`chu` miyu para in` adelanta i kahan iya Marianas? Hafa na megai tautau-ta dumiñgu i tanu`? Seguruyu` na pot nesessidat yan appottunidat linala` familian niha ni sumen taya` guine. Haf` mohon?

Poresu na debi satton in` ta`lun umebalua yan analisa haf` sustansian gobietnu "ginen i tautau". Ileghu na libianu in` lie` haf`

finatsun miyu guine na puntu.

Sagua` publiku

Apmam deste ke hu guaddia sagua` publiku guine. Diariu hu pulan kau guaha halu`u humalom ni piligru kontra linala` i man-gaige siha gi kanton tasi gi ge` halom.

Estayu' yayas man-uma fisga gi apaga'hu kulan mohon para bai' lulai. Gi mediu karera gi 2014 bai' pega papa' lapeshu petmanente kumu kabales na ritirau. Haye gai interes umukupa este na patte gi gaseta, na tuñgu'yu' ya bai esgaihon hau halom.

Este na offisiu debi un' chogue gi hilu sensian responsablidat yan metgot na kinimiten proteksion direchun publiku gi asuntun linahyan siha. I primet kuestion: Hafa i asuntu? Ennague' tutuhon-mu.

Muñga ma`añau `sino hinahalañg. Bes enkuando, siempre u fitme dos timomu mamokat gi halom barañka na sabenetan asuntun linahyan. Patte i atlibes na opiñion kulan finatton ha`ane yan pueñge. Lau debi i ineppe u saga gi hafa asuntu. Cha`mu dispreressia petsonat i otru. Ta`lu, faisen maisa hau "hafa i asuntu" antes de un`tuge` sentimentomu.

Magahet debi diariu un` fananatai man-sustansiau siha na materiat yan estudiau na asuntu pot para u mas fitme kinemprendemu yan lagse` tinige`mu. Sin kinemprende tai bali biahimu.

Poresu na diariu presisu na un` fanaita, ebalua, analisa yan komprende haf i asuntu antes de un` tuge` papa` hinassomu. Gi tutuhon ha` `nai kulan mapot pot nuebu na offisiu. Dispues, haf` na gumigimen hau hanom. Haf` regaluña? Tai apas salape` lau motmut konsensiamu agradesimientu pot kontribusion-mu gi asuntun linahyan siha.

Kada kayada hinanau-ta mattu otru problema ya ha palo`pu hit. Haf` na hagun niyog gi troñku ni malago` ha` domeskansa lau kada ratu ginapot ni mañglo` Disiembre. Lau pot man-tautau hit na tai finagpu`. Sustenene metgot sensian esperansa puede mas mauleg i nuebu na sakan. Felis Añu Nuebu! Si Iku.

2013 headlines spotlight disorder, fuel distrust

By ADAM GELLER
AP NATIONAL WRITER

t last, the damage done by an agonizing global recession was easing. A bitter U.S. presidential election was finally over. And as 2013 began, it seemed the year might bring news headlines offering the public some reassurance or relief.

The year started, after all, with an inauguration that held out the chance for at least a slight thaw in the U.S. political deepfreeze. The prospects were bolstered by economic tail winds that pushed unemployment to its lowest level in five years, lifted stocks to record highs and boosted home prices. News is never predictable, of course. But as 2013 unfolded, it seemed possible that a country worn by infighting, the toll of tough times and tragedy, might begin to find its stride.

Instead, the year's headlines were often filled with tales of dysfunction, discord and misplaced trust that added distressing new chapters to an already too-long narrative. At a time when many people say that the political system and societal institutions aren't working, the news in 2013 provided multiple sources of confirmation, both in the U.S. and abroad. It was the year that things broke down — or at least it often left many people feeling that way.

Those misgivings were validated when star cyclist Lance Armstrong and slugger Ryan Braun admitted their long, proud denials of doping were lies; by revelations of the warning signals authorities missed before the mass shooting at the Washington Navy Yard, and missed chances to save lives after a mammoth typhoon hit the Philippines; by angry street protests in Turkey, Egypt and Ukraine and even by a new pope who acknowledged the need to clean up the Vatican.

But the dysfunction that often grabbed the headlines this year found its anchor in Washington, D.C., beginning almost immediately after President Barack Obama took the oath for his second term and a Congress supposedly mindful of the public's dissatisfaction returned to the capital.

For weeks, senators on both sides of the aisle spoke of a new willingness to come together on previously non-existent common ground and attempt to reform immigration laws.

"We have an obligation and the need to address the reality that we face," said Republican Sen. Marco Rubio of Florida, a leading voice in his party on immigration.

"Now is the time," Obama said days later.

But after the Senate passed a comprehensive bill with bipartisan support, efforts at reform stalled in the Republican-controlled House of Representatives, putting even piecemeal changes at least temporarily out of reach.

At about the same time, with the grief of last December's school shooting in Newtown, Connecticut, still fresh, the White

House pushed forward on its pledge to bridge divisions and shepherd reforms to gun laws through Congress. But the more time passed the more likely it seemed that lawmakers might find nothing they could agree on, until even a push to compromise on expanded background checks for gun purchases that was widely supported by voters also failed.

"Shame on you!" two women in the Senate gallery shouted out when the results of the vote were tallied, voicing a disgust with government that, by year's end, became the one commonality among Americans who agreed on little else. It didn't end there.

Shadows were again cast over the government's ability to act fairly and functionally when scandal enveloped the Internal Revenue Service over its intense scrutiny of conservative organizations. Later, it became clear, the agency had also screened liberal groups.

Then, in June, Americans were confronted by disturbing new questions. Ever since the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks, the public had largely accepted the proposition that entrusting government to keep society safe meant ceding some measure of privacy and convenience. Then, a previously unknown former National Security Agency contractor named Edward Snowden began leaking classified documents pointing to the government's broad surveillance of not just potential foreign enemies, but also America's allies and its own citizens.

Still, while critics lambasted the NSA as a symbol of government unhinged, nobody questioned that the agency was at least working. By October, many Americans counting on government for more mundane services would have been grateful for such functionality. First, the Republican-controlled House refused to fund the government without cuts in spending or delays in implementing Obama's signature health care reform law, resulting in a partial government shutdown that cast a capital built on a swamp into a new morass of hot air and stagnation.

The shutdown, and the coinciding worries about whether it might soon be repeated, dominated the news even as the debut of the health care overhaul it sought to derail went largely overlooked. But when lawmakers reopened the government after more than two weeks with little, if any, discernible gain, the spotlight turned on the workings of Obama's Affordable Care Act—the one that was supposed to demonstrate government's singular ability to deliver change—and found it almost entirely out of order, feeding the public's broadening and deepening sense of distrust and dismay.

This was the year, after all, when one Gallup poll found public confidence in Congress at the lowest level ever—not just for law-makers, but for any institution on record. More than 85 percent of Americans surveyed by the Harris Poll this fall said the people running the country don't really care what happens to them, up from 50 percent in 2010. And an AP-GfK Poll found nearly two-thirds of Americans expressed mistrust of one another, continuing a four-decade drain on what is arguably a necessary ingredi-

ent for effective democracy.

No doubt, the country and the world have faced far more dire crises. But the trade-off of modern technology is that we now live in an information storm that, true to this year's headlines, buffets Americans with repeated examples of institutional dysfunction, making misgivings self-confirming, said Sheila Suess Kennedy, author of "Distrust, American Style: Diversity and the Crisis of Public Confidence."

"We are marinating in an information society—sometimes a misinformation society—and I think it's much harder for people to avoid," says Kennedy, noting how the news this year fed distrust unimaginable just a few generations ago, when people were generally less aware of institutional misconduct. "I'm unwilling to say to you that life was simpler, but we thought it was simpler."

Certainly not all of the news of the past year was in that vein. After years of sanctions and threatening rhetoric, six world powers struck an interim deal with Iran limiting its nuclear activities. Federal officials, long faulted for not going after Wall Street firms, completed lengthy investigations that saw JPMorgan Chase and SAC Capital ordered to pay huge fines. Even the federal government's health care website began to function as the year neared an end.

But that did not alleviate the continuing drumbeat of news that left the public to question, not just government, but also big business, major league sports and religious institutions.

The new pope, Francis, spoke to some of those misgivings almost immediately after his elevation, naming panels to help reform the scandalized Vatican bank and overhaul the church's tangled bureaucracy.

But he also went a good deal further, embracing a message that has long been part of church doctrine, but addressing it as his priority: capitalism, itself, is broken, he said, warning against a culture that fosters "the globalization of indifference."

It was one more headline, one more reminder of modern society's shortcomings, even as it spotlighted the continued struggle to make our highly imperfect institutions work. The benefits of that struggle were easy to lose sight of as a year full of frustrations neared an end. So perhaps it was fitting that one of the year's last big news stories—the death of South Africa's Nelson Mandela and the remembrances of the life he lived—reminded us that resolutions to even the most intractable crises can be found when society and its leaders begin by acknowledging the problems and their capacity to address them.

"I don't know, but there are not very many heads of state who would so easily say, 'I'm sorry,'" said former Archbishop Desmond Tutu, recalling Mandela in a tribute days after his death. "And I hope that not only we, but our leaders, would emulate him."

Adam Geller, a New York-based national writer, can be reached at features@ap.org or followed on Twitter at https://twitter.com/AdGeller.

12 TUESDAY, DECEMBER 31, 2013 SAIPAN TRIBUNE

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam Homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

The Weather

5-Day Forecast for Saipan and Tinian



Partly cloudy with isolated showers. Northeast winds 10 to 20 mph.

▲88° ▼76°





Partly cloudy with isolated showers. Northeast winds 10 to 20 mph.

▲ 88° ▼ 76°



Mostly cloudy with isolated showers.

▲87° ▼77°

Partly cloudy with isolated showers

▲ 87° ▼ **77°**



Partly cloudy with isolated showers.

▲87° ▼77°

Yesterday's Satellite Image



Around The Globe Auckland Partly Cloudy ▲69 ▼60 Beijing Windy **▲** 47 **▼** 24 Hong Kong **▲**66 ▼55 Sunny Honolulu Showers **▲**80 **▼**67 London Showers **▲**50 ▼44 Los Angeles Sunny **▲** 75 ▼48 Partly Cloudy ▲85 ▼75 Manila Melbourne Mostly Sunny ▲78 ▼56 Miami Thundershowers ▲82 ▼68 **▲**37 **▼**21 New York Windy Mostly Sunny Osaka **▲**53 ▼45 **Paris** Showers **▲**48 **▼**44 Pusan Windy **▲**53 ▼36 Rome Partly Cloudy ▲55 ▼42 Salem Cloudy **▲**48 ▼39 San Francisco Partly Cloudy ▲65 ▼43 Seoul Partly Cloudy ▲42 ▼27 **▲**55 **▼**38 Tokyo Sunny

	Ti	des	
Saipan Ha	rbor		
12:24 AM	Today	Low Tide:	-0.5 Feet
7:26 AM	Today	High Tide:	1.9 Feet
12:35 PM	Today	Low Tide:	1.2 Feet
5:47 PM	Today	High Tide:	2.1 Feet

Washington, DC Mostly Cloudy ▲42 ▼32

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120	130	140	150	160	170

PICTURE TIME: 1:00PM, MONDAY, DECEMBER 30, 2013

Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

Radar and satellite show isolated showers and patchy trade-wind cloudiness near and east of the Marianas. Buoys are indicating seas near 7 ft. A narrow band of showers and thunderstorms south of Kosrae has persisted overnight. Due to proximity, added a slight chance of thunderstorms for the morning at Kosrae. A weak surface trough north of the near-EQ trough did bring showers and thunderstorms to parts of Yap state overnight. Model analysis still shows the trough in the vicinity of Yap. Satellite imagery also shows isolated convection around Yap. Kept slight chance TSTMS in forecast for both Yap and Palau thru today, but with improvement for tonight.

Sur	rise/Suns	et	Moon	rise/Moor	set
Today	6:43 AM	5:57 PM	Today	5:01 AM	4:44 PM
Wednesday	6:43 AM	5:58 PM	Wednesday	6:03 AM	5:48 PM
Thursday	6:43 AM	5:58 PM	Thursday	7:04 AM	6:54 PM
Friday	6:44 AM	5:59 PM	Friday	8:01 AM	7:57 PM
Saturday	6:44 AM	5:59 PM	Saturday	8:54 AM	8:59 PM

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- BIRTHDAY GREETINGS A way for families and friends to greet their loved ones, accompanied by a picture of the person celebrating
- his/her birthday. Corporate donations, volunteer work, promotions, granting of awards, team-building exercises, meetings are other activities by members of the business community.
- SAMU'T SARI Pictures from the islands' Filipino community, primarily focusing on Filipino activities, gatherings, get-togethers. volunteer work. etc.
- **TRÁVELOGUE** Pictures of off-island travels. Contributors may submit up to 10 pictures for consideration

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- Announcements of upcoming activities of organizations, community clubs, government agencies, and private companies
- Announcements of upcoming activities in public and
- private schools, as well as calendar of activities. May include PTSA meetings, enrollment procedures.

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- Must have complete details (who, what, where, when), the name of contact person, and phone number.
- Photos must have been taken in the last two months. ■ For birthday greetings, must be submitted no later than 12 noon of the previous day to make it to next day's edition.

For announcements:

■ Must have complete details (who, what, where, when),

235-8747, 235-2440, fax 235-3740.

the name of contact person, and a phone number ■ Must be submitted no later than 12 noon to make it to next day's edition.

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- Mail: PMB 34, P.O. Box 10001, Saipan, CNMI 96950 ■ Drop off: 2nd Floor, JP Center,

To check if contributions are i 6397, 235-2440, 235-8747

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FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF DECEMBER 21, 2013

	PAR	TUR	ES		ARF	RIVAL	.5
SAIPAN-GUAN	(GIIM)			GUAM (GUM)	-SAIPAN		
UA5070	• • • • •	5:05am	Daily	UA5069		3:35am	Daily
UA5068		9:30am	Daily	UA5071		8:05am	Daily
UA5039		3:10pm	1, 4, 5, 7	UA5039		1:00pm	1, 4, 5, 7
0110007	1.00piii	o.iopiii	via Rota	UA5038		1:50pm	2, 3, 6
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SAIPAN-NARI	TA (NRT)			NARITA (NRT)-SAIPAN		
DL287		8:40am	1, 2, 4, 5, 6	DL298	•	3:00pm	Daily
DL297		7:20pm	Daily	DL288			1, 3, 4, 5, 7
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SAIPAN-BUSA	N (PUS)			BUSAN (PUS)-SAIPAN		
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D2102		5:50am	3	0Z603		2:20pm	Daily
0Z606		6:30am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7	D2103		1:00am+1	
076063		7:20am	4. 7	0Z605		1:00am+1	
D2104		5:30pm	6	0Z605		1:30am+1	
0Z604		7:10pm	Daily	0Z6053		2:30am+1	
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3U8648	6:10am	8:40am	1, 4, 5, 7	3U8647	10:40pm	5:00am+1	3, 4, 6, 7
SAIPAN-BEIJI				BEIJING (PE	K)-SAIPAN		
MU764	4:10am	8:00am	1, 5	MU763	7:55pm	3:10am+1	4, 7
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LEGEND: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); 3U: Sichuan Airlines; MU: China Eastern; UA: United Airlines; DL: Delta Airlines; OZ: Asiana; VLK: Vladivostok Air; SYL: Yakutia Air; D: Dynamic Airways.

ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. The Saipan Tribune is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)

FREEDOM AIR FLIGHT SCHEDULE

Airline	ETD	ETA F	requency	Airline	ETD	ETA F	requency
Guam-Rota				FRE 115	13:00	13:10	Daily
FRE 100	7:30	8:00	Daily	FRE 117	14:30	14:40	Daily
Rota-Saipan				FRE 119	16:00	16:10	Daily
FRE 100	8:20	8:50	Daily	FRE 121	16:40	16:50	Daily
Guam-Rota				FRE 123	17:40	17:50	Daily
FRE 300	17:00	17:30	Daily	FRE 125	18:30	18:40	Daily
Rota-Saipan	17:50	18:20	Daily	THE IEO	10.00	10.10	Duny
Saipan-Rota				Tinian-Saipan			
FRE 200	9:30	10:00	Daily	FRE 102	7:05	7:15	Daily
Rota-Guam	10:20	10:45	Daily	FRE 104	7:50	8:00	Daily
Saipan-Rota	.0.20		J 4.1. 1	FRE 106	8:20	8:30	Daily
FRE 400	18:55	19:25	Daily	FRE 108	9:00	9:10	Daily
Rota-Guam			,	FRE 110	10:00	10:10	Daily
FRE 400	19:40	20:10	Daily	FRE 112	11:05	11:15	Daily
				FRE 114	12:00	12:10	Daily
Saipan-Tinian	. 4F		D 1	FRE 116	13:30	13:40	Daily
FRE 101	6:45	6:55	Daily	FRE 118	14:50	15:00	Daily
FRE 103	7:30	7:40	Daily	FRE 120	16:20	16:30	Daily
FRE 105	8:00	8:10	Daily	FRE 122	17:00	17:10	Daily
FRE 107 FRE 109	8:40 9:10	8:50 9:20	Daily	FRE 124	18:05	18:15	Daily
FRF 111	9.10 10:45	9.20 10:55	Daily Daily	FRF 126	18:50	19:00	Daily

NMI CRIME **STOPPERS**

Anonymous tips can now be submitted through the following:

- Call 234-7272 (PARA) on any telephone
- *11 on any PTI cellular phone Log on to the internet at www.nmicrimestoppers.com

(6397), 235-2440, fax 235,3740. E-mail: editor@saipantribune.com. Website:www.saipantribune.com.

Out of Afghanistan

MANAS TRANSITION CEN-TER, Kyrgyzstan—The Guam Army National Guard's last cluster of soldiers in Afghanistan finally departed North Kaia, Kabul, on Dec. 28 and arrived to a frigid cold in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan, thus completing Guam's exodus of nearly 600 troops that recently ended their Operation Enduring Freedom campaign.

Close to 150 from the Guam Army National Guard's 1st Battalion, 294th Infantry Regiment left Afghanistan's capital and arrived at this transition site safely. Guam's

island warmth immediately hit, as other Task Force Guam soldiers stationed elsewhere in Afghanistan also arrived hours apart, creating a reunion of sorts. More than two dozen Foxtrot Company soldiers formerly based in Kandahar Airfield, as well as others from Delta Company, once at Camp Stone, west Afghanistan, met their Kabulbased brothers and sisters here.

The Guam soldiers will stay here for a few days. They'll head next to Camp Shelby, Miss. for demobilization.

Guam officially ended its historic OEF mission on Dec. 26.

Approximately 200 Guam Guardsmen are in Kyrgyzstan.



Close to 150 Task Force Guam soldiers from 1st Battalion, 294th Infantry Regiment, Guam Army National Guard, departed North Kaia, Kabul, Afghanistan Dec. 28 and represented the last of nearly 600 that completed a historic Operation Enduring Freedom right after Christmas Day. The flight crew of this C-17 Globemaster III cargo aircraft honored the soldiers by draping the Guam flag above them. Front row: Spc. Steven Quinata, Staff Sgt. Rodney Retuyan, Spc. Anthony Cruz, Spc. Michael Brown and Spc. Michael Manley.

SGT. EDDIE SIGUENZA



SGT. EDDIE SIGUENZA

Twenty-thousand feet above Earth, Capt. Brandon Leigh, left, and Capt. Jeff Pecora of the 817th Expeditionary Airlift Squadron Detachment 1 based out of Manas Transition Center, Kyrgyzstan, pilot a C-17 Globemaster III carrying close to 150 soldiers from 1st Battalion, 294th Infantry Regiment, Guam Army National Guard, from North Kaia, Kabul, Afghanistan. Holding the "Going Home Task Force Guam" sign is Air Force Staff Sgt. Jeremy Nallay.



A jubilant group from Headquarters-Headquarters Company, 1st Battalion, 294th Infantry Regiment, Guam Army National Guard, express their happiness for leaving Afghanistan as part of Task Force Guam's last members to do so Dec. 28 at North Kaia, Kabul, Afghanistan. Shown: Staff Sgt. Jonathan Brookfield, Spc. Vanity Palomo, Sgt. 1st Class Frank Limtiaco, Sgt. 1st Class Steven Villagomez, Spc. James Esperon, Sgt. hine Taitingfong and Chief Warrant Officer 2 Joseph Manglona



Capt. Marleen Tarusan-Legaspi, Sgt. Maj. Manuel Blas, Spc. Fletcher Persinger, and Chaplain Ronaldo Pascua of Headquarters-Headquarters Company, 1st Battalion, 294th Infantry Regiment, Guam Army National Guard, prepare duffel bags Dec. 28 at North Kaia, Kabul, Afghanistan, during Task Force Guam's final movement out of Afghanistan after concluding Operation Enduring Freedom.



Happy New Year from the staff and management of First Hawaiian Bank.

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Pounding of rice highlights Mochitsuki Festival

Island residents and tourists alike congregated at the heart of Garapan last Saturday night to witness the annual Mochitsuki Festival, which is the Saturday bookend event of the 2013 Christmas in the Marianas festivities at the Paseo de Marianas.

Hundreds were entertained by the traditional dance steps of the Saipan Awaodori Team that added to already decidedly Japanese feel of the event.

Soon the beat of Awaodori drums was replaced by the pounding of Japanese glutinous rice, as people from all walks of life and from near and far took turns helping make the mochi.

Mochi is Japanese rice cake made of mochigome, a short-grain japonica glutinous rice. The rice is pounded into paste and molded into desired shapes.

While eaten year-round, mochi is a traditional food for the Japanese New Year and is commonly sold and eaten during that time.

PDM Promotions president Misako Kamata was very happy about Saturday's turnout and thanked everyone for making this year's Mochitsuki Festival a success.

"I'm very happy. The Mochitsuki Festival is the Japanese way of celebrating the New Year. It's a way of welcoming the New Year. We want to share the mochi to local people and tourists together at the same time," she said.

PDM Promotions, Inc. director Hideaki Sawada echoed Kamata's sentiments on why the Japanese hold the Mochitsuki Festival, although he said Saipan holds it a few days before Jan. 1 for convenience.

"The Mochitsuki Festival, we usually do it in New Year but Saipan we do it before the end of this month. Everybody is busy New Year here so we just do it right now," he said.

Sawada explained that the Mochitsuki Festival is Christmas and New Year rolled into one in their home country.

"Mochitsuki Festival is very important in Japan. It's some kind of tradition in New Year. Like American people they're happy during Christmas. In Japan, our Christmas is the New Year and at the center of that is mochi."

The Ukulele Jammers, Saipan Music and Dance, and a group from Green Meadow School also performed at the festival.

The winners of the 2013 Christmas in the Marianas caroling, float, and Christmas tree decoration contests were also announced at the festival.

Games and cultural activities such as yoyo, Kujibiki raffle, ring throw, and slipper toss were also conducted, while food and drink vendors that participated included Java Joe's, Okadaya, Hula Girl, Lyn's BBQ, Furasato Restaurant, and Kinpachi Restaurant.

Sponsors of the event were DFS Galleria Saipan, Tan Siu Lin Foundation, CNMI Public School System, Moby Dick Restaurant, Power 99, KKMP, Magic 100FM, MIS Enterprises, Inc. Marianas Visitors Authority, KCNM, and Kinpachi Restaurant. (Mark Rabago)



Saipan Awaodori Team members ushered in the pounding of the glutinous rice with their swash-buckling performance in last Saturday's Mochitsuki Fetsival at the Paseo de Marianas.



A young Saipan Awaodori Team member tries his hand in pounding the glutinous rice.



Maxine Rabago tries her hand in the traditional pounding of the glutinous rice.



PDM Promoters, Inc. president Misako Kamata gently positions the glutinous rice dough as two volunteers are ready to pound it.



Saipan Awaodori Team members enthusiastically beat their dreams on stage during the Mochitsuki Fetsival.

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 31, 2013 **15** SAIPAN TRIBUNE

Business

Top business story in 2013: Booming stock markets

Warren Buffett even as Congress almost wrecked the economy.

U.S. stocks rocketed to new heights, and markets in Japan and Europe jumped, too. The gains enriched investors and defied a still-subpar economic rebound from the Great Recession.

Budget fights closed much of the U.S. government for 16 days. Leaked classified documents showed that the National Security Agency collected private online communications via Internet companies. The disastrous rollout of President Barack Obama's health care law confirmed fears of a bureaucratic train wreck

Central banks embarked on a shopping spree. JPMorgan Chase paid a record \$13 billion for its role in the housing bust. General Motors flashed signs of its old horsepower. A colossal merger for American Airlines and US Airways took flight. Twitter's IPO recalled the dizzy dot.com era. And the heartbreaking deaths of 1,100 garment workers in Bangladesh showed that some overseas factories serving U.S. companies remain unsafe.

The stock market boom was chosen as the top business story of 2013 by business editors at The Associated Press. Washington's gridlock and dysfunction came in second, followed by revelations involving the NSA.

Here are the top 10 business stories of 2013:

STOCK MARKETS SURGE: The Dow Jones industrial average set a record in March and hardly stopped to celebrate. The blue chip average has soared roughly 25 percent so far, its best performance in a decade. Stocks stand out as among the few areas of the economy to fully recover from the 2008 financial crisis.

The Federal Reserve's bond purchases helped cut long-term interest rates, making stocks more alluring than bonds. Also, companies boosted share prices through an unusually large \$751 billion in stock buybacks. And corporate profits achieved a record share of the U.S. economy. The explosiveness of the stock rally prompted fears of a bubble because economic growth has been tepid by historical standards.

FEDERAL CHAOS: Congress nearly derailed economy-not once but several times. Lawmakers allowed a Social Security tax cut to lapse after Jan. 1, which shrank Americans' paychecks. Then they let deep federal spending cuts take effect in March because they couldn't agree on a budget. The dysfunction peaked in October: Unable to pass a 2014 budget,

It was an easy year to emulate Congress shut down part of the government for 16 days. National parks were closed. Federal employees stayed home. The government even risked a default on its debt until, with just hours to spare, Congress reopened the government and by December forged a two-year budget deal.

> **TECH COMPANIES AND NSA:** Big Brother has logged on. The U.S. government gathered data on online messages through a program that's intended to stop terrorism but that touches the communications of ordinary Americans. Internet companies already track users and then sell customized digital advertising. But they reacted indignantly after documents leaked by a former NSA contractor said the agency had backdoors at Google, Yahoo, Facebook, Apple and Microsoft. The companies said they provided data only as required by federal courts. They tried to mend any public fallout by pressing the Obama administration to curb electronic snooping and to let the companies disclose more information about government requests for their users' online

> activities. JPMORGAN CHASE: The biggest U.S. bank agreed to pay \$13 billion for its part in the housing frenzy that sparked the financial crisis. The agreement dwarfed the previous record settlement with the government: \$4 billion against BP for its 2010 oil spill. JPMorgan Chase and banks it had acquired had misled Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac about mortgage bonds it sold them that later went belly up. The settlement represented 60 percent of JPMorgan's 2012 net income. On the bright side for the bank: Most of the penalty is tax-deductible.

> **HEALTH CARE LAW:** The medicine didn't go down smoothly when the new health care law launched in November. It was almost impossible for uninsured individuals and small businesses to sign up on the glitch-ridden federal website. The Obama administration swung into emergency mode to fix the site. But businesses would need to enroll with paper applications until November 2014. The insurance plans offered online also drew sour reviews. Premiums rose for some small businesses. Others were unhappy with the limited plans and doctor networks. But some businesses were spared the mess. Before the launch, the government delayed until 2015 the mandate that companies with more than 50 employees provide health coverage or pay penalties.



In this Dec. 19, 2013 photo, trader Kevin Lodewick, center, works on the floor of the New York Stock Exchange.

CENTRAL BANKS GO LOW: The Fed and other central banks supported growth by keeping rates ultra-low. Investors, home buyers and corporations benefited. But many who depend on income from savings accounts suffered. Chairman Ben Bernanke kept the Fed's key short-term rate near zero and abandoned previous guidance about when a rate increase might eventually occur. The Fed finally decided in December to pare its bond buying program but will do so very gradually. The Bank of Japan has held rates near zero and pledged to double that country's money supply by buying bonds. And the Euro-

pean Central Bank cut its rate twice to 0.25 percent.

BANGLADESH TORY: Cheap jeans and T-shirts can impose a human cost. That was driven home in April, when a building in Bangladesh that housed garment factories collapsed and killed more than 1,100 people. The tragedy put pressure on clothiers and retailers such as Wal-Mart, the Gap and H&M to upgrade their working conditions in that nation. The overstuffed building had cracked from the weight of industrial machines. Angry garment workers in Bangladesh burned down a nine-story building in November. Protesters managed to secure a 77 percent minimum wage increase to the equivalent of \$3.17 a day for

new unskilled workers. **AIRLINES MERGE:** American Airlines emerged from bankruptcy with a bang merging with US Airways to form the world's biggest airline. The new American Airlines Group handles 6,700 flights a day to 339 destinations. Despite closing the merger in December, the combined company will have to operate as two carriers until their fleets get approval to combine, likely within two years. Just four airlines now control 80 percent of the U.S. market. Less competition has returned airlines to profitability, but tickets are getting pricier as carriers limit seats. Analysts said fewer competitors and a more concentrated control of routes will likely mean higher fares.

TWITTER IPO: The business of 140-character blast communiques thrilled Wall Street. Twitter went public in November at \$26 a share; the price has since more than doubled. It was among 222 IPOs this year, the most since 2000. But Twitter is trading at an extremely high 50 times its projected annual revenue. That's evidence of both hype and the expectations being imposed on social media companies to deliver growth. Facebook's shares rebounded after its IPO flop last year. LinkedIn and Yelp also gained. But there were losers in the social media world: Shares of Groupon and game-maker Zynga tanked.

COME-GM BACK: Just years ago, General Motors—and, by extension, much of the U.S. manufacturing base—needed taxpaver life support. But the automaker behind Chevy, Cadillac, Buick and GMC has roared back. The Treasury Department unwound its stake in GM this year at a \$10.5 billion loss. But the government rescue saved more than 1 million jobs and helped return once-dominant GM to profitable health. It boasts \$26.8 billion in cash, \$1.3 billion to upgrade five Midwest factories and a new CEO: Mary Barra, the first female head of a major U.S. car company.



Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands Coastal Resources Management

Caller Box 10007, Behind Department of Public Safety Bureau of Motor Vehicle, Susupe, Saipan MP 96950 Website: www.crm.gov.mp Tel. (670) 664-8300 • Fax (670) 664-8315



December 31, 2013

THE FOLLOWING IS A PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENT OF COASTAL PERMIT APPLICATIONS RECEIVED BY THE CRM OFFICES:

	APPLICANT	DATE APPLICATION RECEIVED	APPLICATION PROJECT DESCRIPTION	LOCATION	ТҮРЕ	STATUS
1. Se	Sea Touch. LLC	11/20/2013 SMS-2013-X-070	Sharks & Rays Marine Parks	Fiesta Resort	Major Siting	Certified Complete (12/27/2013)
2. BI	Blue Lagoon Realty Inc.	12/10/2013 SSm-2013-X-072	Renovation	Chalan Kanoa	Shoreline APC	Approved (12/18/2013)*
3. Sa	Gaipan Crew Boats	12/23/2013 SPIm-2013-X-075	Dry Dock	Lower Base	Ports & Industrial APC	Approved (12/23/2013)*
1	sland Blue Saipan Ssm-2013-X-076	12/23/2013	Concession	Garapan	Shoreline APC	Under Review
5. BI	Blue Lagoon Realty Inc.	12/27/2013 SMS-98-X-56 (2013 Amend)	Change of Ownership	As Peredido	Amendment	Under Review
6. Sa	Saipan Crew Boats	12/27/2013 SPIm-2013-X-077	Dry Dock	Lower Base	Ports & Industrial	Under Review

Publication of the above list is in accordance with CRM Regulations, which require all permit applications to be published in a local newspaper within 15 days of receipt of application. The list reflects recently received permit applications and those with a recent change in status. New applications are marked with an asterisk (*)

The Public is invited to submit written comments regarding any of the above projects for which a permit decision has not been issued. All permit comments should identify the project by application number. Your comments should be mailed or hand-delivered to the CRM Office. All persons who desire a public hearing regarding any project may do so by submitting a written request for a public hearing to the CRM Office within fourteen (14) days for minor permits (APC's) and proposed amended major sitings. Public Hearings are required for all new major siting projects. All public hearing notices are published in a local newspaper of general circulation. Residents of Rota and Tinian may submit comments and hearing requests to their local CRM Coordinator. Persons wishing to retain the right to appeal a CRM Permit decision must file a notice of appeal with the CRM office within thirty (30) days of the issuance of the CRM permit decision as provided in Part 200 § 15-10-235 of the CRM Regulations.

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Job Vacancy Announcement

Strategic Gaming Solutions, Inc. has immediate job openings for the following positions:

General Manager, Electronic Gaming (1)

<u>Position Summary:</u> Plan, direct and co-ordinate the operations of a business, division, department or operating unit of Strategic Gaming Solutions, Inc. Plan and maintain systems and procedures for operating efficiency. Manage staff for optimum performance. Ensure compliance with all applicable CNMI and Federal laws and adherence to and maintenance of policy of confidentiality within the gaming operation; and to produce

Position Requirement: High School graduate, GED or equivalent and a certificate in gaming operations or management plus 13 years of successful work experience in one or more gaming operations, 7 years of which must be as a gaming table or gaming machine manager; ability to communicate effectively with guests, team members and management in both written and verbal form and the ability to handle multiple tasks; demonstrated experience and ability to manage all table games and must be computer literate. Knowledge and experience in strategic planning; marketing, brand reinforcement; networking, stakeholder communication; financial management, forecasting, budgeting; team building and development; staff management, mentoring and motivation; organizational, coordination and time management; complete all documentation accurately in accordance with standards and applicable local and federal laws. Ability to work any shift or hours; must be willing to work shifts, evenings, holidays, and weekends; highly motivated, organized, outgoing, with excellent and leadership skills. Ability to work any shift or hours.

Human Resources Officer (1)

<u>Position Summary:</u> Responsible for planning, development, and implementation of all HR policies, procedures, standards, systems and program; provide supervision and direction as well as coordinate all activities of the Human Resources Office to ensure that all established goals are achieved; Manages and administers a specialized corporate-wide human resource activity such as recruitment, selection and retention, employee relations, compensation, training and development, organizational development, dassification, training or benefits and occupational safety. Responsible for major program administration, policy and procedure formulation and implementation involving in-depth communication and analysis.

Position Requirement: Degree or diploma in human resources management, business administration, public administration or equivalent plus 3 years generalist human resources experience or professional level experience in human resources with at least two years supervisory experience or any equivalent combination of experience, education and/or training where personnel skills and managing people are demonstrated; knowledge of the principles and practices of HR management; knowledge of business principles; knowledge of HR relevant legislation and regulations; knowledge of relevant software; knowledge and experience in strategic planning, workforce planning, performance management and HR alignment; highly motivated, organized, outgoing, with excellent communication and leadership skills; computer literate.

Finance Manager (1)

Position Summary: Responsible for the entire function and activities of the Finance Department, for applying accounting principles and procedures to analyze financial information, forecast revenue and expenditures, preparing accurate and timely financial reports and statements and ensuring appropriate accounting control procedures.

Position Requirement: Bachelor's degree in Accounting, Business Administration or related area; or four to six years related experience and/or training; or an equivalent combination of education and experience. Minimum of three (3) years experience in accounting, in management of financial systems and budgets, financial reporting, financial data analysis and forecasting, auditing, taxation and providing financial advice, preferably in the gaming industry, with progressive supervisory/managerial experience required Experience as a financial manager who has led a focused, business oriented team.. Good oral and written communication skills. Must be a practical, logical and decisive individual with the ability to get the job done. Must be extremely numbers-oriented and computer-literate, with superior spreadsheet skills; proficiency in accounting and Excel software highly preferred.

Executive Assistant (1)

Position Summary: Perform all and/or any combination of clerical duties requiring knowledge of systems practices, or procedures and use of all types office machines; maintain and control all aspects refig to club management systems; supervise and participate in the Electronic Gaming Machine soft count and the issuing and collection of cash floats to the Bar; and carry out regular audits of Food and Beverage stocks as requested by the Finance Manager.

Position Requirement: High School graduate, GED or equivalent plus 3 years work experience in responsible office management providing high level support; be able to communicate clearly in and possess a good command of verbal and written English. Knowledge of administrative and clerical procedures and systems such as word processing, managing files and records, stenography and transcription, designing forms, and other office procedures and terminology. Proficient computer skills and in-depth knowledge of relevant software such as MS Office Suite. Knowledge of standard office administrative practices and procedures.

Must be willing to work shifts, evenings, holidays, and weekends. Highly motivated, organized, outgoing, with

excellent communication and leadership skills an advantage

Shift Manager (3)

<u>Position Summary:</u> Responsible and accountable for the overall efficient and profitable operation of all operational areas of the e-gaming/digital gaming lounges of the corporation. Maintain with the support of all subordinate personnel the highest standards of efficiency, customer service and security, in accordance with the policies and procedures of the corporation. Assume the duties and authority of (Operational areas of the Club — Gaming, Bar, waiters/waitresses, security officers and deaners) the General Manager in his/her absence, and perform any other special duties as requested from time to time by the General Manager.

Position Requirement: Degree in business management or related field or any equivalent combination of experience, education and/or training where gaming operations or gaming management skills and managing people are demonstrated. Able to communicate clearly in and possess a good command of verbal and written English. A minimum of 3 years' experience in casino gaming / slots management/e-gaming machine/table games. Ability to work in a team. Must demonstrate the ability to supervise the activities of others.

Electronic Gaming Machine Technician (3)

Position Summary: Responsible for the efficient running of all electronic gaming machines, servrs and IT systems. Repair, service and maintain electronic gaming machines in order to minimize down time of machines which results in loss of revenue. Organize the activities of maintenance and technician contractors.

Position Requirement: High School graduate, GED, technical school plus a minimum of 3 years work experience as a slots or e-gaming machine technician in a casino or equivalent or any equivalent combination of experience, education and/or training in e-gaming machines repair, service, and maintenance skills can be demonstrated. Able to communicate clearly in and possess a good command of verbal and written English. Knowledge of various types of electronic gaming equipment used on casino floor and demonstrate the skills and ability to diagnose problems, take corrective action necessary, and ensure device is operational as quickly and efficiently as practical.

Gaming Floor Supervisor (2)

Position Summary: Supervise and organize the gaming floor, maintaining the highest standards of efficiency, security and customer satisfaction, in accordance with the procedures and policies of the corporation. Responsible and accountable for the overall efficient and profitable operation of all operational areas of the gaming floor through subordinate personnel. Assume the duties and authority of the Shift Manager in his/her absence, and perform any other special duties as requested from time to time by the General Manager

Position Requirement: High School graduate, GED or equivalent plus 3 years successful work experience in slots or gaming club or lounge supervisory management or any equivalent combination of experience, education and/or training where personnel skills and managing people or managing gaming floor supervision or operation

Guest Services Officer (2)

Position Summary: Responsible for ensuring the smooth operation of the guest services desk on a designated shift. Ensure full support is given to visiting junkets, premium players and VIP's visiting the e-gaming/digital

Position Requirement: High School graduate, GED or equivalent plus 3 years successful work experience as a guest services officer in a casino , slots or gaming club or lounge or any equivalent combination of experience, education and/or training where guests services skills are demonstrated. Able to communicate clearly in and possess a good command of verbal and written English. Excellent Public Speaking and communication skills. Must be computer literate with effective negotiating and problem solving skills.

Compensation: All positions will be filled and paid at a rate commensurate with qualification, work experience,

Job Location: Saipan and at all offices or e-gaming/digital gaming lounges of the corporation.

Application: Applications may be obtained from the HR Office of Kanoa Resort, Saipan, Beach Road, Susupe, Saipan. The detailed job description & KSA and benefits for each position is available for review by applicants. Deadline for submission of completed applications is January 6, 2014 at 5:00 p.m.

Nation



This Nov. 29, 2013 file photo shows part of the HealthCare.gov website on a computer screen in Washington.

Health care overhaul is top 2013 story

NEW YORK (AP)—The glitch-plagued rollout of President Barack Obama's health care overhaul was the top news story of 2013, followed by the Boston Marathon bombing and the dramatic papal changeover at the Vatican, according to The Associated Press' annual poll of U.S. editors and news directors.

The saga of "Obamacare"—as the Affordable Care Act is widely known-received 45 first-place votes out of the 144 ballots cast for the top 10 stories. The marathon bombing received 29 first-place votes and the papal transition 21.

Other strong contenders were the bitter partisan conflict in Congress and the leaks about National Security Agency surveillance by former NSA analyst Edward Snowden.

Last year, the top story was the massacre of 26 children and staff at an elementary school in Newtown, Conn. That result came after a rare decision by the AP to re-conduct the voting; the initial round of balloting had ended Dec. 13, a day before the Newtown shooting, with the 2012 election at the top.

The first AP top-stories poll was conducted in 1936, when editors chose the abdication of Britain's King Edward VIII.

Here are 2013's top 10 stories, in order: **HEALTH CARE OVERHAUL:** The

White House had hoped the Oct. 1 launch of open enrollment would be a showcase for the upside of Obama's much-debated overhaul. Instead, the website became a symbol of dysfunction, providing Republicans and late-night comics with ammunition, and worrying the president's Democratic allies. The site gradually improved, but a wave of cancellation notices from insurers undercut Obama's oft-repeated promise that people who liked their existing coverage could keep it.

BOSTON MARATHON BOMB-ING: In seconds, a scene of celebration transformed into one of acarnage, as two bombs exploded near the finish line of the Boston Marathon in April. Three people were killed and more than 260 injured, including at least 16 who lost limbs. Authorities soon identified two suspects—26-year-old Tamerlan Tsarnaev, who died in a shootout with police, and his brother, Dzhokhar, 20, who faces multiple charges, including 17 that carry a possible death penalty. Though jolted by the bombings and a subsequent lockdown, the city rallied under the slogan "Boston Strong."

VATICAN CHANGEOVER: Pope Benedict XVI stunned Catholics around the world with his announcement in February that he would resign. The cardinal elected to succeed him, soon known as Pope Francis, proceeded to captivate many Catholics and non-Catholics alike with a new tone of openness, modesty and tolerance. Without challenging core church doctrine, he suggested it was time to rethink policy on divorce, focus more on serving the poor, and devote less rhetoric to condemnations of gay marriage and abortion.

DIVIDED CONGRESS: Opinion polls showed Congress with historically low approval ratings, and the key reason was seemingly intractable partisan conflict. Among the consequences were the harsh automatic spending curbs known as sequestration, the partial shutdown of the government in October, and bitterness in Senate after the Democrats used their majority to reduce the Republicans' ability to stall presidential nominations via filibusters.

NSA SPYING: The ripple effect continues, seven months after the world learned of Edward Snowden. The former NSA analyst leaked vast troves of secret documents detailing NSA surveillance operations, including programs that collected Americans' phone records and eavesdropped on allied leaders. After a stay in Hong Kong, Snowden spent a month in Moscow's airport before obtaining asylum in Russia. The leaks have roiled diplomacy, triggered lawsuits and calls for reform, and prompted warnings that terrorists could benefit from the disclosures.

GAY MARRIAGE: Capping decades of activism, the gay-rights movement won a monumental victory in June in the form of two Supreme Court decisions. One cleared the way for ending a ban on same-sex marriages in California, the most populous state. The other struck down a 1996 law passed by Congress that banned federal recognition of same-sex marriages. In subsequent months, Hawaii, Illinois and New Mexico boosted the number of states allowing gay marriage to 17.

NELSON MANDELA: A freedom fighter, a political prisoner, a statesman revered for preaching reconciliation in a nation torn by racial strife. Nelson Mandela was all that and more—the icon of the anti-apartheid movement and South Africa's first black president. With his death at the age of 95, his compatriots, world leaders and countless other admirers mourned the loss of a one-ofa-kind hero.

PHILIPPINES TYPHOON: There were dire warnings beforehand, but the toll wreaked by Typhoon Haiyan was still stunning in its scope after it struck on Nov. 8. More than 6,000 people died; hundreds more remain missing. The typhoon damaged or destroyed the homes of more than 16 million people, with rebuilding expected to take years.

SYRIA: The death toll mounted inexorably, past 120,000, as Syria's nearly 3-year-old civil warfare raged on with no signs of resolution. The government of Bashar Assad did agree to eliminate its chemical weapons, but prospects for peace talks were complicated by infighting among anti-government rebels. Nearly 9 million Syrians have been uprooted from their homes, with many of them seeking refuge abroad.

MISSING WOMEN FOUND: The call for help came on May 6, and the revelations that followed were gripping and grim. A former bus driver. Ariel Castro, had abducted three women from the streets of Cleveland from 2002 to 2004 when they were 14, 16 and 20. He periodically kept them chained, restricted access to food and toilets, and repeatedly raped and assaulted them until their escape. Castro pleaded guilty to multiple charges, and in September, faced with life in prison, hanged himself in his cell.

SAIPAN TRIBUNE TUESDAY, DECEMBER 31, 2013 **17**

Asia

UN chief visits typhoon-hit Philippine villages

By JIM GOMEZ ASSOCIATED PRESS

TACLOBAN, **Philippines** (AP)—U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon on Saturday visited central Philippine villages that were decimated by Typhoon Haiyan, and promised to try to raise at least \$800 million in aid to help the region recover from last month's devastating storm.

Children who survived the Nov. 8 typhoon welcomed Ban by singing "Jingle Bells" at a school in worst-hit Tacloban city. Accompanied by U.N. and Philippine officials, Ban clapped his hands and swayed playfully, telling the children: "Please hold on. Don't despair. We have come to help you."

Although he stayed for only about two hours, Ban was the most prominent world leader to visit the vast wasteland of debris and wrecked villages left by Haiyan, one of the strongest storms to slam into land on record. The typhoon killed at least 6,100 people, with more than 1,700 others listed as missing. It damaged or swept away more than a million homes and injured 27,000 people.

"I'm standing here with a

DHAKA,



U.N. Secretary General Ban Ki-moon, center, talks to the media in Tacloban, Philippines, Saturday, Dec. 21, 2013.

very heavy and sad heart," Ban told reporters as he stood beside huge mounds of muddy

debris and toppled posts in Tacloban's Fatima village. He said the destruction he saw

was "beyond description."

More than 200 heavily armed police secured the road Ban's ban's airport. Along the road, the U.N. chief saw wrecked vil-

taker to oversee the polls. Ha-

sina has rejected the demand

and vowed to go ahead with

Sunday's rally was seen as

the last major attempt by the

opposition to derail the elec-

tion, but the protest was un-

likely to succeed because of

the government's hard-line

More than 150 people have

died in political violence in

Bangladesh since the crisis

intensified in October. The

conflict pits an opposition alli-

ance led by Zia's party against

Hasina, who accuses Zia of

protecting people being tried

or convicted of war crimes in-

volving the nation's 1971 inde-

pendence war against Pakistan.

Jamaat-e-Islami, the main

partner of Zia's party, wants

the government to halt the war

crimes trials of its leaders. Zia

savs the trials initiated by Ha-

sina are politically motivated

to weaken the opposition, an

allegation the government

has denied. Jamaat-e-Islami

the elections.

approach.

long convoy took from Taclo-

lages, toppled posts and tent encampments housing thousands of homeless survivors.

Wearing a blue cap, rubber shoes and a khaki shirt, Ban waved at crowds, stopping to tell survivors, "Don't lose hope, don't lose hope."

Ban flew to Tacloban after meeting with President Benigno Aquino III and other top officials in Manila to discuss recovery and reconstruction efforts. He said foreign governments needed to chip in to rebuild the typhoon-wrecked regions.

He said the U.N. was trying to raise at least \$800 million over the next 12 months and provide life-saving support such as food, water, shelter and sanitation. It will also help craft a long-term development strategy.

About \$237 million, or 30 percent, of the fund has already been raised, according to a U.N.

The Philippine government will focus on resettling the displaced and repairing infrastructure, Ban said.

Aquino appealed earlier in the week for international aid, saying the destruction and losses from the typhoon amounted to about \$12.9 billion.

Defense Secretary Voltaire Gazmin said that the disaster zones were on their way to recovery, but that it would take at least four years to rebuild entire towns.

18 mourners killed in Indonesia road collision

SURABAYA, Indonesia (AP)— An overcrowded pickup van with dozens of mourners slammed into a truck on Indonesia's main island of Java, killing at least 18 people and injuring 14 others, police said Sunday.

The pickup was carrying a group of 29 mourners from East Java's province Probolinggo town who were on their way to pay respects to their relative in neighboring Pasuruan city, said local deputy police chief Capt. Mustofa.

He said the vehicle was moving uncontrollably and collided with a trailer truck while trying to overtake three other cars late Saturday. The occupants were thrown from the pickup and 15, including two children, died instantly. The others died in the hospital.

Both drivers were among the injured. The driver of the pickup was facing charges of reckless driving, said Mustofa, who like many Indonesians uses a single name.

Road accidents are common in Indonesia, where safety standards are poor.

Fresh political violence grips Bangladesh; 1 dead



Opposition Bangladesh Nationalist Party lawyers are shot with water cannon by police during a protest in Dhaka, Bangladesh, Sunday, Dec. 29, 2013.

killed in Dhaka's Malibagh area when security officials fired rubber bullets to disperse the Zia attempted to come out activists, said police official Mozammel Haque. Witnesses said the violence broke out after a group of activists from the op-

> Stick-wielding ruling party supporters chased stone-throwing opposition activists on the premises of the Supreme Court. Witnesses said dozens of people were injured in that violence.

position Jamaat-e-Islami party

began marching in the streets.

Public transportation in Dhaka was suspended, cutting the capital off from the rest of the country. The opposition blamed police for preventing buses and other vehicles from traveling to the city. Traffic was thin on Dhaka's usually clogged streets, with many people staying home in fear of violence.

Zia's Bangladesh Nationalist Party said it would continue the protest Monday, and urged its supporters to block roads, railways and waterways

across the country.

Local media reported that more than 650 people had been detained since Friday as part of a nationwide crackdown ahead of the Jan. 5 elections, which the opposition is boycotting. Opposition parties said those detained are their activists, but police said they were taken in on specific charges to prevent acts of

The opposition insists Hasina should resign and hand over power to an independent careis banned from taking part in the election. Many citizens are frustrated by the raging chaos in Bangladesh, which is struggling to overcome poverty, establish democracy and increase per capita income.

"Too much blood has been spilled in these past many weeks. We demand a stop to such bloodletting," Dhaka's Daily Star newspaper said in an editorial Sunday.

Bangladesh (AP)—Security forces and opposition activists clashed in Bangladesh's capital on Sun-

day, leaving at least one person dead, as thousands of police took to the streets to foil a mass rally calling on Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina to cancel upcoming elections.

Reports said authorities had detained hundreds of people in a crackdown ahead of next weekend's elections, further deepening the impoverished South Asian nation's political crisis.

Hasina's political rival, Khaleda Zia, a former prime minister and the current opposition leader, had hoped to address the rally in defiance of a government ban on large political gatherings. But security officials surrounded Zia's home in Dhaka's unscale Gulshan area and parked sand-laden trucks in an apparent effort to obstruct her from leaving her home. Police denied that the measures were taken to stop her from joining the rally.

of her home, but police built a barricade that prevented her from getting to her car. TV video showed an angry Zia condemning Hasina's government, saying, "Stop this."

Meanwhile, thousands of security forces, mainly police, tried to prevent the activists from rallying.

A 21-year-old student was

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World

16 killed in suicide bombing in Russia's south

bomber struck a busy railway station in southern Russia on Sunday, killing at least 15 other people and wounding scores more, officials said, in a stark reminder of the threat Russia is facing as it prepares to host February's Olympics in Sochi.

No one immediately claimed responsibility for the bombing in Volgograd, but it came several months after Chechen rebel leader Doku Umarov called for new attacks against civilian targets in Russia, including the Sochi Games.

Suicide bombings have rocked Russia for years, but many have been contained to the North Caucasus, the center of an insurgency seeking an Islamist state in the region. Until recently Volgograd was not a typical target, but the city formerly known as Stalingrad has now been struck twice in two months—suggesting militants may be using the transportation hub as a renewed way of showing their reach outside their restive region.

Volgograd, which lies close to volatile Caucasus provinces, is 900 kilometers (550 miles) south of Moscow and about 650 kilometers (400 miles) northeast of Sochi, a Black Sea resort



Experts and police officers examine a site of a trolleybus explosion in Volgograd, Russia Monday, Dec. 30, 2013.

flanked by the North Caucasus Mountains.

The bombing highlights the daunting security challenge Russia will face in fulfilling its pledge to make the Sochi Games the "safest Olympics in history." The government has deployed tens of thousands of soldiers, police and other security personnel to protect the games.

Through the day, officials issued conflicting statements on casualties. They also said that the suspected bomber was a woman, but then reversed themselves and said the attacker could have been a man.

The Interfax news agency quoted unidentified law enforcement agents as saving that footage taken by surveillance cameras indicated that the bomber was a man. It also reported that it was further proven by a torn male finger ringed by a safety pin removed from a hand grenade, which was found on the site of the explosion.

The bomber detonated explo-

sives in front of a metal detector just beyond the station's main entrance when a police sergeant became suspicious and rushed forward to check ID, officials said. The officer was killed by the blast, and several other policemen were wounded.

"When the suicide bomber saw a policeman near a metal detector, she became nervous and set off her explosive device," Vladimir Markin, the spokesman for the nation's top investigative agency, said in a to as "black widows."

statement earlier in the day. He added that the bomb contained about 10 kilograms (22 pounds) of TNT and was rigged with

Markin later told Interfax that the attacker could have been a man, but added that the investigation was still ongoing. He said that another hand grenade, which didn't explode, was also found on the explosion site.

Markin argued that security controls prevented a far greater number of casualties at the station, which was packed with people at a time when several trains were delayed. About 40 were hospitalized, many in grave condition.

Earlier, Lifenews.ru, a Russian news portal that reportedly has close links to security agencies, even posted what it claimed was an image of the severed head of the female's attacker. It even said the attacker appeared to have been a woman whose two successive rebel husbands had been killed by Russian security forces in the Caucasus.

Female suicide bombers, many of whom were widows or sisters of rebels, have mounted numerous attacks in Russia. They often have been referred

SEC. WORLD BRIEFS

At least 10 killed in bus **explosion Volgograd**

MOSCOW (AP)—Russia's Emergency Situations Ministry says at least 10 people have been killed in a bus explosion in Volgograd, a day after a suicide bombing that killed at least 17 at a railway station in the city. The explosions put the city on edge and highlighted the terrorist threat that Russia is facing as it prepares to host the Winter Games in February. Volgograd is about 650 kilometers (400 miles) northeast of Sochi, where the Olympics are to be held. There was no immediate claim of responsibility for either explosion, which came several months after Chechen rebel leader Doku Umarov called for new attacks against civilian targets in Russia, including the Sochi Games.

Bombing wounds 4 soldiers in northeast Egypt

CAIRO (AP)—A bomb exploded outside a military intelligence building northeast of Egypt's capital Sunday, wounding four people and damaging the structure as protests and security scares roiled the country just weeks before a key vote. The bombing struck the military intelligence building in Anshas, a village 50 kilometers (30 miles) northeast of Cairo that is home to number of military facilities, including an air base and Egypt's first experimental nuclear reactor. AP Television News footage showed debris littering the ground and a large gash in one of its walls. Military spokesman Ahmed Mohammed Ali said on his official Facebook page that the explosion damaged the back wall of the military intelligence office and wounded four soldiers guarding it.

Former F1 driver Schumacher in critical condition

(AP)—Seven-time Formula One champion Michael Schumacher was in critical condition after undergoing brain surgery following a skiing accident in the French Alps on Sunday, doctors said.

The Grenoble University Hospital Center said the retired racing driver arrived at the clinic in a coma and underwent immediate surgery for a serious head trauma.

It was not clear whether the 44-year-old Schumacher was still in a coma but the hospital statement, which was signed by a neurosurgeon, an anesthesiologist and Marc Penaud, the hospital's deputy director, said "he remains in a critical condition."

Schumacher fell while skiing off-piste in Meribel earlier Sun- when he broke his leg during day and hit his head on a rock. a crash at the Silverstone race according to a statement from the resort. Resort managers said he had been wearing a helmet and was conscious when rescuers first responded to the scene.

Earlier in the day, the Meribel resort said Schumacher had been taken to Grenoble for tests and authorities said his life was not in danger.

But the situation began to appear more serious when the resort said that orthopedic and trauma surgeon Gerard Saillant had traveled from Paris to the hospital in Grenoble to examine Schumacher. German news agency dpa said it was Saillant who operated on Schumacher



In this Thursday, Aug. 30, 2012 file photo, Mercedes Grand Prix driver Michael Schumacher of Germany, looks on ahead the Belgium Formula One Grand Prix in Spa-Francorchamps circuit, Belgium.

course in 1999.

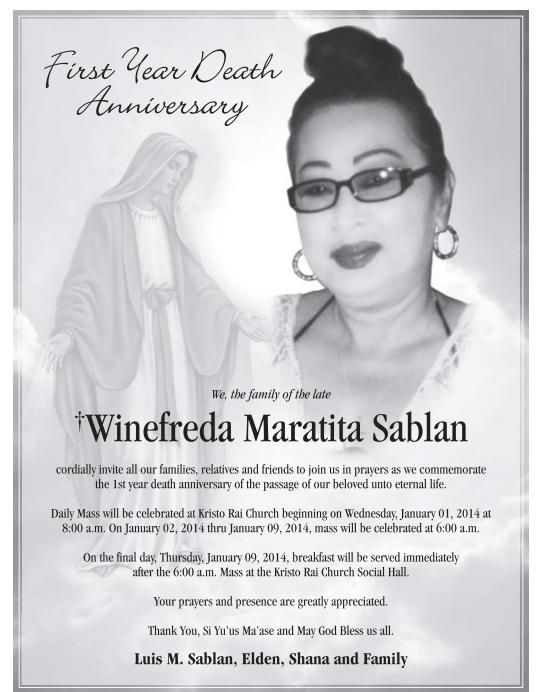
In an email to The Associated Press, Schumacher's manager Sabine Kehm said the champion German driver was on a private skiing trip and "fell on his head."

"We ask for understanding that we cannot give running updates on his condition. He wore a helmet and was not alone," Kehm said. Schumacher's 14-year-old son was skiing with his father when the accident happened, the resort said.

As news of the accident spread, Formula One drivers used social media to wish Schumacher a quick recovery.

Syria evacuates **5.000** from town near Damascus

BEIRUT (AP)—The Syrian government evacuated some 5,000 people Sunday from an embattled industrial town near Damascus where al-Qaidalinked rebels have been battling government troops for more than two weeks, the state news agency said. Opposition fighters from Jabhat al-Nusra, or the Nusra Front, swept into Adra northeast of the capital in mid-December, reportedly killing civilians, many of whom are members of the Alawite and Druse sects. Both minority communities largely support President Bashar Assad, who himself is an Alawite, against the primarily Sunni-led rebellion. Shortly after the rebels pushed into Adra, Syrian soldiers surrounded the area and there has been heavy fighting there since.



SAIPAN TRIBUNE TUESDAY, DECEMBER 31, 2013 **19**

In Humble Gratitude

We the family of the late

†Damiana Olkeriil Kaipat

(Retired Nurse & Nursing instructor)

wish to extend a Happy Holiday to all who have helped us during this difficult time. Your untiring love, support and prayers has given us strength especially during this Holiday Season.

Our family would like to extend our deepest gratitude, appreciation, and a special thank you to Ariel H. De Guzman of St. Luke Netcare, Dr. Cervantes and her team along with all the Medical Staff of St. Luke Global for all their hard work during our beloved's stay in Manila, Philippines. Thank you to CHC's staff of Doctors and Nurses for their hard work during the time our beloved spent as a patient in CHC.

Thank you to Fr. Ayuyu and Fr. Florentino Daynos of the Diocese of Chalan Kanoa, Blossoms Floral and Gifts, Borja Funeral Home for their exemplary funeral services. Thank you to Mrs. Lourdes Saures of the St. Jude Thaddeus Joyful Choir along with Ms. Vivian Rdiall & Mr. Roland along with the Ave Maria Choir for leading the prayers and singing during our nightly rosaries.

Thank you to Dr. Helen Taro, Mrs. Pasquana Calvo along with the CNMI Nursing Association, Mrs. Vicky Fitial of the St. Jude Parish and Mrs. Marcy Cepeda of Kristo Rai Parish. Thank you to the Kaipat, Litulumar, Saures, Davis, Aldan, Norita, Taitano, Castro Families, the family in Palau and in the U.S mainland and to all those who we have failed to mention, for everyone's combined effort and dedication to our beloved and our family.

We are greatly blessed to have loving and caring relatives and friends such as you, who took the time to give us love and support to comfort us in this most difficult and trying time of our lives.

To one and all, Kmal Mesulang, Olomwaay, Dangkulo na Si Yu'us Ma'ase, Maraming Salamat.

God bless and may you have a prosperous New Year.

Diego L. Kaipat, Children and Family



20 TUESDAY, DECEMBER 31, 2013 SAIPAN TRIBUNE

Life & Style

No contest: Miley was our 2013 pop-culture queen

By JOCELYN NOVECK AP NATIONAL WRITER

all her this year's pop-culture prom queen. A year ago, Miley Cyrus was no stranger to us, of course. But who could have guessed how her star would rise-or rather, explode—in 2013, making this former preteen idol one of the most watched people on the planet? And so it seems only right to make Miley our tour guide (Kim and Kanye, you came close!) as we take our annual, highly selective, chronological tour through the year's pop culture moments:

JANUARY

A new year brings an inauguration in Washington, D.C., but even the president admits the weekend's most important development is a bouncy new hairdo—bangs!—for MICHELLE OBAMA. Mini-scandal: BE-YONCE sings the national anthem, only to admit later she lipsynced. At the Golden Globes, JODIE FOSTER makes an awkward, rambling but deeply compelling speech, hailed by many in the gay community as her long-awaited coming-out. LANCE ARMSTRONG confesses—to OPRAH WINFREY. Meanwhile, KIM KARDASHI-AN basks in the glow of her justannounced pregnancy (proud dad is KANYE WEST) and says she looks forward to privacy—good luck! MILEY CYRUS, beginning her big year, is happily ensconced in her engagement to



Times For 12/27 - 01/02 www.REGmovies.



In this Aug. 25, 2013 file photo, Miley Cyrus performs at the MTV Video Music Awards at the Barclays Center in New York

LIAM HEMSWORTH...

FEBRUARY

Or is she? It's Oscar time, and MILEY, in a sexy backless white dress, makes news for who she ISN'T with at a post-Oscar party—her fiance. The Oscars bring triumph to BEN AFFLECK and "Argo," his somewhat-true movie about a truly fake one. And they bring us a new sweetheart: JENNI-FER LAWRENCE, who trips onto the Oscar podium and into our hearts. Elsewhere, BEYONCE admits her inauguration lip-syncing, then rocks the SUPER BOWL with a spectacular halftime show, sung live, of course...

MARCH

Things are heating up for MI-LEY—she's the March Cosmo cover girl. Of her major image change from those HANNAH MONTANA days, she notes: "Some of the worst things that have happened in my career... have actually been what's best for me." That would be music to JUSTIN BIEBER's ears. In a bad start to a bad year, the 19-year-old pop star is booed by fans when he shows up late to a concert, struggles with his breathing and faints backstage at a show, is caught on camera clashing with a paparazzo, has his pet monkey confiscated by German authorities when he fails to produce proper papers...and it's only March!

APRIL

Remember KIM KARDASHI-AN's five-minute marriage to NBA star KRIS HUMPHRIES? No? Well, the couple's divorce comes through. GWYNETH PALTROW makes waves at the "Iron Man 3" premiere in a dress with see-through panels on both sides, leaving little of her lower body to the imagination and em-

bodying a trend of bare skin on red carpets. It's clearly working: This month, she's named People magazine's Most Beautiful Woman. MILEY's ever-changing style morphs again: She seems to be ditching her engagement ring and is wearing longer hair with side bangs...

MAY

But not for long! It's all bleached, spiky hair for Miley at the punk-themed Costume Institute Gala at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, where she hobnobs with the fashion elite, cementing her status as someone we're watching this year. At the Cannes Film Festival, a real-life jewel robbery makes headlines, partly because it coincides with Sofia Coppola's new movie, "Bling Ring," about young bling thieves. BIEBER's monkey officially becomes German property.

JUNE

Time for a KIMYE update, and it's a biggie: a daughter is born! The couple name her North West, inviting inevitable comparisons to other oddly named celebrity progeny (Apple Martin, anyone?) MILEY watch: "We Can't Stop" is No. 4 on Spotify's most-viral list. Oh yes and Miley's dad, BILLY RAY CYRUS, is getting divorced from his wife of 19 years, Tish Finley Cyrus. But wait...

JULY

Never mind—the divorce is off. More important, we have a royal birth! As she emerges from the hospital holding Prince George, it's noted that KATE MIDDLETON, aka the Duchess of Cambridge, isn't concealing her "mommy tummy," a development cheered by fellow moms across the world. On the KIMYE front, President Obama doesn't help get himself on the Christmas card list when he notes that in his day, "Kids weren't monitoring every day what Kim Kardashian was wearing or where Kanye West was going on vacation, and thinking that was the mark of success." Ouch! MILEY gets a documentary on MTV. "We Can't Stop" is No. 2 on Billboard's Hot 100 chart, and she says in an interview: "People just evolve, and that's all that's happened to me."

AUGUST

Maybe this is what she meant by

MILEY will be remembered for most, thanks to her infamous performance on the MTV Video Music Awards, where she twerks her way into pop culture history in a teddy bear leotard that segues to a skimpy nude bikini. Of course, there's the foam hand, too, the constantly stuck-out tongue and the vulgar gestures. By morning, we can't talk about anything else. We'd like to stop...but we can't!

SEPTEMBER

An "it" girl of the Hollywoodfashion nexus becomes even hotter. TV's "Scandal" actress WASHINGTON KERRY makes glamorous appearances at New York Fashion Week, where she judges "Project Runway" in a pretty Stella Mc-Cartney floral number, and at the Emmys, in an eye-catching Marchesa gown. MILEY watch: Her reps confirm her engagement to Hemsworth is off...

OCTOBER

But hey, KIMYE's getting hitched! WEST proposes to Kardashian at the AT&T Park, home of the San Francisco Giants, with a screen read-"PLEEEASE MARRY MEEE!!" He also makes an uncomfortable appearance with Jimmy Kimmel, an effort to defuse a feud stemming from a parody skit. MILEY hosts "Saturday Night Live," playing a salacious version of Michelle Bachmann. Maybe it's not a

evolving? August is the month great idea to give MILEY advice: After Irish singer SINEAD O'CONNOR counsels her publicly to avoid being sexually exploited by the industry, MILEY strikes back on Twitter, mentioning O'CONNOR's struggles with bipolar disorder.

NOVEMBER

Time for some year-end awards. "Twerk" is on the shortlist for the Oxford Dictionary word of the year, though it loses out to "selfie." People magazine's Sexiest Man Alive is singer ADAM LEVINE. On the GQ annual list of least influential celebrities, Miley is No. 6, but don't feel TOO bad, Miley, President Obama is No. 17. At the American Music Awards. meanwhile, MILEY doesn't disappoint, performing "Wrecking Ball" as a duet with a giant, lip-syncing CGI kitten.

DECEMBER

More nods to MILEY's popculture dominance: MTV names her artist of the year. As for KARDASHIAN, she ranks No. 3 on GOOGLE's list of most-searched people in the U.S., the only non-singer on the list. Fiance West is No. 10. And Google's No. 1 is ... come on, did you have any doubt? MILEY also tops Yahoo's mostsearched list. (KARDASHIAN is second.) And, as the year ticks to a close, guess who's going to be rocking out in Times Square? Happy MILEY Year.

Thai mega mall tops Instagram's year-end list

By JOCELYN GECKER ASSOCIATED PRESS

BANGKOK (AP)—Sure, the

Eiffel Tower, the Taj Mahal and the Grand Canyon have inspired many photographs. But a shopping mall in Bangkok has claimed this year's crown as the world's most photographed location on Instagram.

In its Top 10 year-end list, the photo-sharing app dubbed Siam Paragon as the planet's most "Instagrammed" spot in 2013. It edged out No. 2 Times Square and No. 3 Disneyland in California on the list that also includes New York's Central Park and Dodger Stadium in Los Angeles.

Paris' iconic steel tower got bumped off the list. And if Siam Paragon seems like an improbable winner consider this: last year's most "Instagrammed" place was again from Thailand-Bangkok's Suvarnabhumi Airport, which this year was at No. 9.

Instagram spokeswoman Tiffany Testo said in an email response that the California-based company does not release data on how many pictures were taken.

The luxury mall in the heart of



In this photo taken on Monday, Dec. 16, 2013, shoppers walk in front of Siam Paragon, a shopping mall in Bangkok, Thailand

Bangkok is not exactly a worldfamous landmark. Sightseeing visitors to the city typically head first to the majestic Grand Palace or take in the serenity of Buddhist temples like Wat Pho. The mall is a trendy meeting place in Bangkok that claims to have more than 100,000 visitors a day. But why is it so avidly photographed?

"All the celebrities come here and post photos of themselves," said Sayamon Srichai, a 33-year-old Bangkok office worker walking past Paragon's tropical Christmas garden with an outstretched arm as she smiled for her smartphone. "Regular people like me want to walk in their footsteps."

Thailand has long been called the Land of Smiles, but it could also be called the Land of Selfies. Thais love taking pictures of themselves, documenting their daily activities and uploading the images instantly so friends know what they're up to. The Southeast Asian country is also one world's biggest users of social media, which could explain why a building that may not be the most photographed in the world still ends up as the most visible on Instagram.

'Hobbit,"Frozen' lead box office to record yea

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Over bustling post-Christmas weekend. Peter Jackson's "The Hobbit: The Desolation of Smaug" continued to lead the box office, landing in the No. 1 slot for the third weekend in a

The Warner Bros. prequel earned \$30 million, bringing the domestic gross to \$190.3 million, according to studio estimates on Sunday.

Disney's animated adventure, "Frozen," took the No. 2 position, earning \$28.9 million over the weekend and \$248.4 million domestically after six weeks at the multiplex.

"'Frozen' probably had the best release date of the year because they positioned themselves to completely dominate the family film marketplace over the holidays," said box-office analyst Paul Dergarabedian of Rentrak. "To be No. 2 in its sixth week is a total reflection of that."

1."The Hobbit: The Desolation of Smaug," \$30 million (\$98.3 million international).

2."Frozen," \$28.9 million (\$50.5 million international).

3."Anchorman 2: The Legend Continues," \$20.2 million (\$8 million international).

4."American Hustle," \$19.6 million (\$1.7 million international).

5."The Wolf of Wall Street," \$19 million (\$6.5 million international)

6."Saving Mr. Banks," \$14.3 million (\$300,000 inter-

7."The Secret Life of Walter Mitty," \$13 million (\$27.2 million international).

8."The Hunger Games: Catching Fire," \$10.2 million (\$9 million international).

9."47 Ronin," \$9.9 million (\$13.8 million international).

10."Tyler Perry's a Madea Christmas," \$7.4 million.

Reigning box-office champion "Hobbit," "really contributed to this record box office that we have at the end of the year," he added. "With 'Hobbit' and 'Frozen,' we are talking \$450 million at the box office between those two films alone. They are absolutely killing it here at the end of the year."

This year is poised to be a banner one at the box office, and it is projected to surpass 2012's \$10.8 billion by nearly 1 percent, making this the highest annual take ever.

Paramount held two slots in the top five over the weekend, with the comedies "Anchorman 2: The Legend Continues," starring Will Farrell, and "The Wolf of Wall Street," featuring Leonardo DiCaprio. Seguel "Anchorman 2" came in at No. 3 with \$20.2 million, and Martin Scorsese's dark comedy, "The Wolf of Wall Street," took the No. 5 spot, earning \$19 million after opening at No. 2 on Christmas Day with \$9.15 million.

"Some people are calling the performance of 'Anchorman' a bit of a disappointment, but it will be a \$100 million gross at the end of the day," Dergarabedian said. "All of the marketing certainly raised its profile. It will



This image released by Warner Bros. Pictures shows Martin Freeman, left, and John Callen in a scene from "The Hobbit: The Desolation of Smaug.

have a good showing."

"Anchorman" met studio expectations over the Christmas

"We are thrilled and we feel the movie will play well in theaters for a while," said Don Harris, president of distribution at Paramount. "The first film brought in \$84 million, and this one will be well north of that."

At nearly three hours long, "Wolf" does not have as many showings in a day as the rest of the pictures currently in theaters,

yet it's holding its own at the multiplex. "The movie is very much out there in terms of content, and that's a good thing," added Harris. "It's different than anything else in the marketplace. I think people are surprised that it's a lot of fun."

At No. 4, Sony Pictures corruption saga, "American Hustle," made \$19.6 million. David O. Russell's entertaining take on the Abscam investigation of the 1970s, starring Christian Bale, Amy Adams, Jennifer Lawrence

and Bradley Cooper, has grossed \$60 million domestically and gained seven Golden Globe nominations.

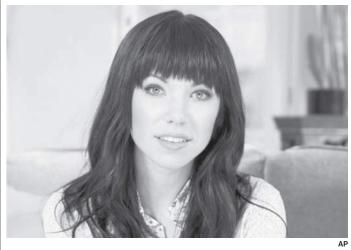
Oscar hopeful "Saving Mr. Banks," Disney's making of "Mary Poppins" story, starring Emma Thompson and Tom Hanks, came in at No. 6, making \$14.3 million.

Fox's "The Secret Life of Walter Mitty," Ben Stiller's dramatic turn, which he also directed, took seventh place, earning \$13 million. "Mitty' is a feel-good film and with the combination of our

excellent exit polls and audience friendly rating at PG-13, I think we are going to play well into the New Year," said Chris Aronson, president of distribution at Twentieth Century Fox. "This has been an incredibly fragmented and healthy marketplace as we're expected to finish with a record year."

And despite lackluster reviews, Keanu Reeves' martialarts film "47 Ronin" managed to slide into the top 10 at No. 9 with \$9.9 million in its opening weekend.

Carly Rae Jepsen heads to Broadway next year



This photo taken April 19, 2012 shows Canadian singer, Carly Rae Jepsen, posing for photographs following an APTN interview at the Landmark Hotel, London.

NEW YORK (AP)— "Call Me Maybe" singer Carly Rae Jepsen has had her calls returned by Broadway.

Producers of "Rodgers + Hammerstein's Cinderella" said Sunday that the Canadian singer-songwriter will take over the role of Cinderella starting Feb. 4 for 12 weeks. She'll take over from Tony Award nominee Laura Osnes.

The Grammy Award nominee began performing in musical theater in high school. She starred in "Annie," "The updated for a new generation.

Wiz" and "Grease" before attending the Canadian College of Performing Arts.

She'll join the cast alongside Fran Drescher playing Cinderella's stepmother. Drescher is an Emmy Award winner for "The Nanny" and takes over Harriet Harris'

The Tony-nominated musical has been given a makeover by Douglas Carter Beane, who has turned the fairy tale into a charming, witty story

Roberts thanks girlfriend following rare illness

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Robin Roberts thanked her longtime girlfriend, Amber Laign, in a year-end post published Sunday on the ABC News anchor's Facebook page.

The message, which follows Roberts' battle with a life-threatening illness, is the first time the "Good Morning America" anchor has publicly acknowledged her 10-year, same-sex relationship with Laign, a massage therapist from the San Francisco Bay Area.

Roberts' post was confirmed by ABC News spokeswoman



This Feb. 24, 2013 file photo shows broadcaster Robin Roberts arriving at the 85th Academy Awards at the Dolby Theatre in Los Angeles.

Heather Riley.

Sunday was the anniversary of Roberts' 100-day milestone following a bone marrow transplant in September 2012 for treatment of myelodysplastic syndrome, a rare blood and bone marrow disease.

In May, Grand Central Publishing announced Roberts, one of the most popular figures in morning TV news, will write a memoir about her battle with MDS and the life lessons she continues to gather following her return to "GMA" last February.

Commuting and email traffic bring out woman's worst



By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

DEAR ABBY: Have you any advice for how a person can handle mornings better? No matter what I do, I start off every work day irritated and grumpy.

I love the mornings, and even get up early so I can enjoy sitting with my coffee and relax before heading out the door. But as soon as I get out into traffic, I'm immediately in a bad mood. Then, sitting down at work and facing all

the emails that come in from my global associates -- usually about some emergency that is plopped in my lap—puts me in more of a

I actually like my job, despite what it sounds like. I just hate starting off every day like this. Telecommuting is not an option for me. What can I do?—MS. GRUMP IN DENVER

DEAR MS. GRUMP: OK, so you're fine until you leave the house. Many people who find morning rush hour to be nervewracking find it calming to listen to audio books or music during GER AMUSED IN OGDEN, UTAH their commute. If that doesn't help you, and it is feasible, consider using another form of transportation that's less stressful.

And when you arrive at work, take a little time to decompress before turning on your computer, whether it is with meditation or deep-breathing exercises for the first 10 or 15 minutes. Both can do wonders for a person's outlook.

DEAR ABBY: A cute little girl lives up the street from my husband and me and attends the same church we do. A few years ago we taught her in a Sunday school class. At the time, she developed a crush on my husband. We both laughed about it then and thought it was sweet.

Fast-forward three years, and it's not so sweet anymore. It's downright awkward. She runs up to my husband multiple times while we're at church, while ignoring me. Last Sunday, she turned to me as she did it and announced, "He's mine!" I stood there thinking, "Uh, no—he's MINE."

I know this jealous reaction may seem silly and I'm trying hard not to feel this way, but it felt like I was fighting over my husband with an 8-year-old. He is aware of her crush and how I feel about it, but he doesn't want to hurt her feelings. Her mother knows about the crush, and we shared a laugh early on.

What can I do? Would speaking to the girl's mother help? What should I say? Or would it make things more awkward?— NO LON-

DEAR NO LONGER AMUSED: The cute little neighbor girl is no longer 5. Three years is a long time for a child to hang onto a crush. Because her behavior bothers you, tell her mother you find it excessive at this point and ask her to tell her daughter she's getting too old to act that way. It's the truth, and your husband should back you up.

DEAR ABBY: I thought I'd share my own New Year's resolution with you. For the past 25 years I have made the following resolution: Each day I will ask myself, "What is the kindest, most loving thing I can say or do at this particular moment?" I invite your readers to consider this—WAYNE IN PUYALLUP, WASH.

DEAR WAYNE: I consider it a refreshingly positive way to start a day, and I'm sure others will agree and add it to their list of New Year's resolutions. Thank you for sharing it.

CONFIDENTIAL TO MY READERS: A word to the wise: If you plan to toast the New Year tonight, please appoint a designated driver. And on this night especially, designated drivers should remember to drive defensively. To one and all, a happy, healthy New Year!—LOVE, ABBY

SAIPAN TRIBUNE **22** TUESDAY, DECEMBER 31, 2013

Pastimes

Calvin and Hobbes

Bv Bill Waterson

Garfield®

By Jim Davis











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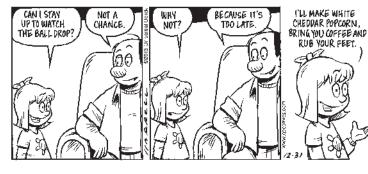
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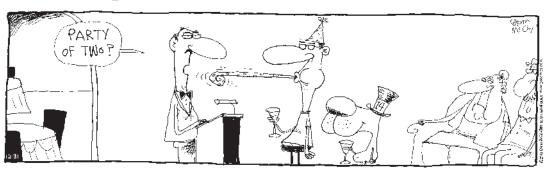
By Bryan Basset

The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy







By Eugene Sheffer **CROSSWORD** A

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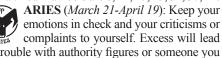
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For answers to today's crossword, call. 1-900-226-5955! 99¢ per minute, touchtone/rotary phones. (18- only.) A King

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Gabrielle Douglas, 18; Psy, 36; Joey McIntyre, 41; Anthony Hopkins, 76.

Happy Birthday: Keep your options open and your ideas rolling. Don't feel obligated to anyone putting demands on you. Reassess your situation and consider ways to use your time wisely and with the intent to reach the goals you set for yourself. Less travel and communication and more hard work and dedication will prove to be beneficial. Your numbers are 6, 14, 17, 25, 31, 37, 42.



to trouble with authority figures or someone you love. Be responsible and protect your body, mind and possessions. Diplomacy and integrity must be maintained. **OOOOO**

TAURUS (April 20-May 20): Look ahead with optimism. Consider ringing in the new year with the people you love. Hosting a small gathering will show your good will and allow you to share any plans you intend to pursue in the new year.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20): Take time to help others. Close the year on a high note by lending a helping hand or making sure you've done your very best to make personal improvements that will not only benefit you but the people you care about most. **222**

CANCER (June 21-July 22): This is the time to make amends if you need to. Offer what you can to those you love. Bare your soul and show your intent and earnest need to do what's right and what's best. Be a role model. 🛇 😂

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): An industrious attitude will help you clear up pressing matters. Last-minute plans will add to your end-of-year celebration. It's time to unveil your plans for the future and prepare those your decisions will affect. VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): Socializing

and participating in year-end festivities will help you kick off the new year in a spirited, positive and eventful manner. Romance will make your personal life better and ensure that you maintain a healthy relationship. LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): You'll want to put the past believed

to put the past behind you and make resolutions that promise a brighter future. Don't let domestic situations discourage you. Avoid anyone who is over-indulgent or brings you down. Surround yourself with positive support. OOOO

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): Face the past, size up the future and enjoy the festivities that unfold as one year ends and another begins. It's out with the old and in with the new. Use your imagination and explore the possibilities that excite you the most. ���

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): New year, new you. Start at home and make whatever positive changes required to achieve your goals. Open up your heart to friends and you'll develop stronger ties and suggestions that can help you make any transition required less stressful. 🛇 🗪

EUGENIA

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): Enforce discipline if you want to avoid indulgence mentally, physically or financially. Bring the year in on a quiet note with close friends. Travel and dealing with controversial individuals or authority figures will lead to trouble. ���

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): There is) too much at risk to tempt fate. Remember what made you unhappy or dissatisfied this past year. Use today as a turning point. List the changes you want to make and the timeline in which you should do so. Embrace the future. **OOO

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20): Revisit your life goals and structure what you feel you must do in order to make the upcoming year your very best. Invest in what you have to offer and make plans to follow through. Make tonight a celebration worth remembering. Birthday Baby: You are unpredictable, charismatic and aggressive. You are always in search

Eugenia's website—eugenialast.com, Eugenia's android app @ http://bit.ly/exhoro and join Eugenia on twitter/facebook/linkedin.

Conceptis Sudoku

By Dave Green

12/31

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Difficulty Level ★★

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Yesterday's Suduku Answer								
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Voctorday's CIIDOVII Answer

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By DAVID WONDERWORD OUELLET

RINGING IN 2014

of adventure and opportunity.

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally, even backward. Find them and CIRCLE THEIR LETTERS ONLY. DO NOT CIRCLE THE WORD. The leftower letters seed that Rendermand

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Ball Drop, Balloons, Beach, Bells, Bubbly, Celebration, Cheer, Cider, Clock, Confetti, Countdown, Dance, Downtown, Dress, Drums, Familly, Fireworks, Food, Friends, Gather, Glitter, Goals, Hats, Holiday, Kiss, Luck, Midnight, Music, New Year's Eve, Noisemakers, Parade, Party, Relaxed, Sparklers, Streamers, Toast, Whistles, Wishes Yesterday's Answer: Hydroflow

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To purchase **THE COLLECTED WONDERWORD, Volume 27, 31, 35, 36, 37 or 38** call 1-803-642-6480. Order online at wonderword universalication com. (Contains 43 puzz es.)

CLASSIFIEDA

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EMPLOYMENT

(1) Beautician. Salary \$5.55/hr. 1 year experience. Call 433-2706 Salon De Tinian.

Hiring Bartender @ Zebra

Must have a minimum of at least 2 years or more related work experiencé.

Located at Paseo De Marianas, Beach Road Side

For more information, please call 789-7856

CLICK IT OR TICKET DAY & NIGHT



JOB ANNOUNCEMENT

- 2 STEWARD
- 1 RESTAURANT SUPERVISOR
- 1 ASSISTANT F&B MANAGER
- 1 BARTENDER/RESTAURANT **SUPERVISOR**

ALL APPLICANTS MUST SUBMIT A COMPANY'S WORK APPLICATION NO LATER THAN THE CLOSING DATE OF JANUARY 6, 2014. THEY CAN BE PICKED-UP AT THE FRONT OFFICE ANYTIME OR THE HR DEPT. M-F.

WANTED

Maintenance Supervisor

- More than 4 years experience
- Computer skills required (word & excel)
- Manage & direct staff members ■ Ability to handle & execute
- projects effectively Extensive experience in purchasing

Submit your resume at Atom's Co., Ltd. Office located in Lower Miha Housing Area, Garapan. For more info please contact 233-8880

JOB VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT

WINCHELL'S DONUTS 1 vacancy for Operations Manager. Wage per

hour depends on qualifications. Must be college level with at least 5 years of continued experience in

managing a bakery or similar operations; must be

capable of managing 15 or more people and more

than one store; must be computer literate and

possesses knowledge in operating cash register or

POS system; must have an experience in handling

the administrative and financial aspect of a

business. Capability of conversing in basic Japanese or other foreign languages is highly preferred.

1 vacancy for Store Manager. Wage per hour

depends on qualifications. Must be college level and

has at least 2 years of continued experience in

managing bakery operations; must have knowledge

in operating cash register or POS system; must be

customer-service oriented, computer literate and

confident in doing basic mathematical skills.

Capability of conversing in basic Japanese or other foreign languages is highly preferred.

4 vacancies for Donut Makers/Bakers. Wage

ranges from \$5.55/hr to \$5.70/hr. Must be a high

school graduate with an equivalent of at least 4 years

experience in baking; must be able to read, write and

speak basic English; must be capable of lifting at

least 50lbs and has basic mathematical skills and knowledge in operating a cash register or POS

system. Capability of conversing in basic Japanese

Additional requirements: All applicants must be

of good health with good moral character. Must be

able to follow grooming standards; provide current

police/court clearance and health certificate. Must

have reliable transportation and must undergo a

Applications may be obtained and submitted at

Winchell's Garapan from 8am to 12pm or email

them at dennys@guam.net

and other foreign languages is highly preferred.

Job opening for (02) SURVEYOR

Rate \$ 5.60 to 8.00 per hour

Must be a college graduate with minimum of 5 years' experience as a surveyor. Must be able to work flexible time.

Surveyor job opening will be closed on January 08, 2014. Interested applicants please Apply at Castro and Associates. Located at Capitol Hill Saipan, CNMI, PMB 377 Box 100000, Saipan MP 96950 contact number (670) 288-8739 A copy of valid Police Clearance must be attached to the application.
Incomplete application will NOT be accepted. Skills testing may be required. Castro and Associates is an **Equal Opportunity Employer**

WHATZIT Solution: Flat out

CLASSIFIEDS RATES AND POLICIES

Saipan Tribune's Classifieds Section gives you the right exposure without hurting your pockets. Stretch your dollar and get results.

CLASSIFIED LINER ADS

Saipan Tribune also offers a Super Saver Package—a complete 5-day run in both print and online editions, for as low as \$30 for garage sales, apartment rentals, help wanted, auto and more. You can choose from any of the packages below.

ADS		сомво		
	(PRINT)	(PRINT AND ONLINE)		
• 3-Liner	\$15	\$30		
• 5-l iner	\$24	\$45		

ADVERTISING DEADLINE

Classified Ads

Ads must be submitted before 12 noon 2 days prior to publication date

CANCELLATION

Classified Ads

Cancellations should be made before 12 noon of the day prior to date of publication.

REFUNDS

Refunds will only be made if cancellation deadlines are met. No refunds will be made once ad is already printed.

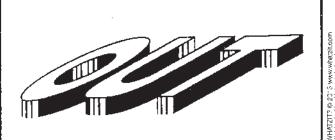
CHECK YOUR ADS

Saipan Tribune will not be responsible for errors after the first day of publication. Errors should be called in before noon of the issue date. Saipan Tribune reserves the right to place ads under proper headings and to revise copy when necessary.

ADVERTISING POLICY

All advertising in the Saipan Tribune are subject to applicable rate sheet, copies of which are available from the Advertising Sales Department (please call 235-8747, 235-2769 or 235-6397). All ads will be subject to approval prior to publication. We reserve the right to edit, refuse, reject or cancel any ad at any time. Also, Saipan Tribune reserves the right to place ads under proper headings and to revise copy when necessary.

Find the familiar phrase, saying or name in this arrangement of letters.



www.facebook.com/dinghatsgame



APARTMENTS FOR RENT

Fina Sisu Terraces

Small 1-BR, 1-BTH. Unit approximately 284 sq.ft. **\$250**/month. 2-BR. 1-BTH. **\$350-\$550**/month. Close to NMC campus. MIHA applicants accepted

Ocean View Terraces

(Navy Hill) Luxury 2BR & 1BTH Apt with private balconv & beautiful view.

Sunset View Terraces

(Navy Hill) Luxury 2BR & 1BTH Apt with private balconv & beautiful view.

LNH Apartments (Lower Navy Hill)

Small 3BR & 2BTH. Unit approximately 600 sq.ft. EPA Solar Water Heater. \$350-\$450/month

FEATURES:

- **Fully Furnished** Back-up Generator
- Air-conditioning in all rooms FREE WiFi
- **Laundry Area**
- Nighttime Security Ample Parking
- 24hr water

Please visit our website at www.saipan-properties.com Call for an appointment 235-6527/8 or 285-1317.

JOB VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT

AND ASK FOR RONEL SUNGA OR RONNIE ANO.

FOR IMMEDIATE SALE

9 PASSENGER CAPACITY IN GOOD CONDITION.

2001, WHITE, LINCOLN LIMOUSINE;

ASKING PRICE \$5,000 OR

BEST OFFER.

CONTACT FIESTA

RESORT AT 234-6412

10-Heavy Equipment Mechanic Rate: \$5.60 \$ to \$7.25 per hour

Must be a h/s grad w/ min of 2 yrs exp as H.E. Mechanic. With knowledge how to diagnose, adjust, repair, or overhaul mobile mechanical, hydraulic, and pneumatic equipment, such as cranes, bulldozers, graders, excavators, trucks and conveyors, used in construction. Must be able to work flexible time.

05 – Painters Rate: \$5.60 to \$6.50 per hour

Must be a h/s grad w/min of 2 yrs exp. as a Painter To paint walls, equipment buildings bridges and other structural surfaces, using brushes rollers and spray guns. May remove old paint to prepare surface prior to painting. May mix colors or oils to obtain desired color or consistency. Must be able to work flexible time.

All positions close on Jan 08, 2014. Applications are available at GPPC Inc office located at As Perdido, Saipan. A copy of valid Police Clearance must be attached to the application. Incomplete application will NOT be accepted. Skills testing may be required. GPPC, INC is an Equal Opportunity Employer.

COMMONWEALTH PORTS AUTHORITY



JOB VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT # 03-2013

Opening date: December 17, 2013

Closing date: January 3, 2014

The Commonwealth Ports Authority (CPA) announces the following job vacancy:

Position:

(1) Accountant-I (Saipan)

AOA Controller/Ground Maintenance-I (Tinian) (1) Vessel Traffic Controller-I (Port of Saipan)

accompanied with a copy of all required diploma/certificates and/or official transcripts, original copy of recent police record not more than six (6) months old, original copy of U.S. Department of Defense Form DD214 for retired members or veterans of our Armed Forces, and other documents as required for the position. Public Law 11-70 requires that all male applicants age 18 to 25 years old must submit documentation evidencing his registration with the Federal Selective Service System. All applications and required documents must be submitted to the CPA Administration Office, 2nd Floor Arrival Building, Francisco C. Ada/Saipan International Airport. Failure to provide any of the required documents may result in automatic disqualification. Certain vacancies may require written and/or physical test. Selected applicants will be subjected to pre-employment drug screening. CPA reserves the right to waive or implement other qualifications to meet its needs. The deadline for submission of applications and required documents is no later than 4:30 p.m.. Friday, January 3, 2014.

Detailed information on qualifications and position description for the above positions shall be picked up along with the application form during regular working hours at the CPA's Administration Office (2nd Floor) of the Saipan International Airport, Arrival Wing. For more information, please contact the CPA Human Resources by email at rita.omar@cpa.gov.mp or by phone at (670) 237-6500.

CPA is an Equal Opportunity Employer and CPA hires those who are legally entitled to employment in the CNMI.

/s/ MaryAnn Q. Lizama

JOB VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT

Century Tours, Inc. is inviting qualified candidates to fill the following positions:

Operations Clerk (01)

Job Duties: Plan, create, arrange and operate tour and travel programs. Responsible for organizing and preparing tour itineraries to make sure meeting visitors requirements. Provide and organize vacation and holidays packages by coordinating and negotiating with airlines, hotels, ground transportation services, tour guides and sightseeing providers, restaurants and other similar businesses, as per contact and agreed customer service levels. Develop and maintain smooth working relationship with customers and business partners both in China and domestic. Provide advice on sightseeing and shopping activities, report any problems to related supervisor/manager, and solve problems with accommodations, itineraries or service, etc. Perform related administrative tasks such as processing paperwork and maintaining files and working comfortably both independently and within a team. Assist the Department Manager in achieving his/her objectives. Input and update of bookings records. Other duties as assigned.

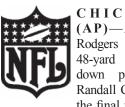
Requirements: Minimum of 1 year of operation experience. High school education minimum. Good command of English and Chinese. Good computer skills and familiar with internet applications. Good writing and communication skills. Focus on details and thoroughness. Able to work with a team & under pressure. English and Chinese speaker preferred.

Applications may be obtained at the Century Tours, Inc. Office at the Kanoa Resort, Ground Floor located on Beach Road in Susupe, Saipan while resumes may be emailed at camille.orallo@saipan.travel. All resumes and applications must be submitted to the Human Resources Department at the Century Tours, Inc. Front Office no later than Thursday, January 2, 2014. Incomplete or late applications will not be accepted. Background checks and pre-employment drug testing may be required prior to employment.

We are an Equal Employment Employer. Women, minorities and disabled persons are encouraged to apply.

Find today's solution in classified section

Pack, Eagles and Bolts in; Ravens and Dolphins out



(AP)—Aaron Rodgers fired a 48-yard touchdown pass to Randall Cobb in the final minute,

and the Green Bay Packers beat the Chicago Bears 33-28 to capture the NFC North championship.

Back after missing seven games with a broken left collarbone, Rodgers found a wide open Cobb on fourth-and-8 at the 48 to wipe out a one-point deficit with 38 seconds left.

Green Bay will host San Francisco in the playoffs next weekend.

The Bears had one final drive, but Jay Cutler's deep pass to Alshon Jeffery was intercepted by Sam Shields on the final play.

That gave the Packers (8-7-1) their third straight division title and fifth postseason appearance in a row. It also kept the Bears (8-8) out of the playoffs for the sixth time in seven years.

Eagles 24, Cowboys 22

In Arlington, Texas, Nick Foles threw two touchdown passes, NFL rushing champion LeSean McCoy had 131 yards and a receiving score, and the Philadelphia Eagles beat the Dallas Cowboys in a win-or-go-home game for the NFC East title.

The Cowboys (8-8), with Kyle Orton filling in two days after Tony Romo had back surgery, lost to a division rival with a playoff berth on the line for the third straight year.

The Eagles (10-6) will host New Orleans in a wild-card game Saturday night.

Dallas trailed 24-16 when Orton threw a 32-yard touchdown pass to Dez Bryant. Orton went back to Bryant for the 2-point conversion, but Cary Williams dove to punch the ball away.

The Cowboys got another chance with a stop from their beleaguered defense, but Orton's pass was intercepted by Brandon Boykin on the first play to seal

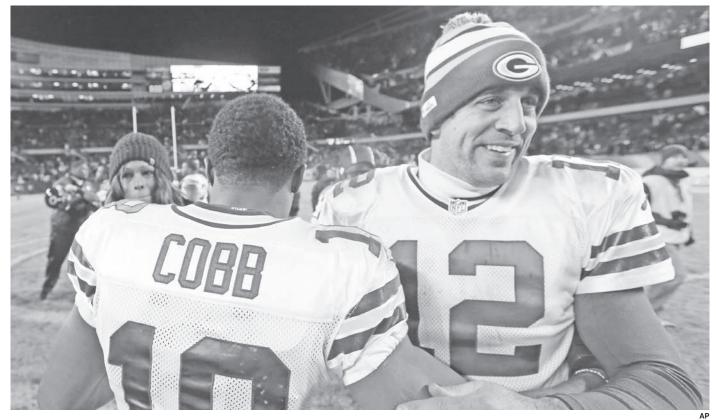
McCoy finished the season with 1,607 yards rushing.

Bengals 34, Ravens 17

In Cincinnati, Andy Dalton threw for two touchdowns, ran for another and set a pair of Bengals passing records, leading Cincinnati to a victory that eliminated the defending Super Bowl champion Baltimore Ravens.

It was an erratic performance by the third-year quarterback, who also threw four interceptions for AFC North winner Cincinnati (11-5).

The Ravens (8-8) lost their last two games, denying them a chance to make the playoffs for a sixth straight season. They couldn't avoid the Super Bowl slump that's so common. The Ravens became the 15th Super Bowl champ that failed to reach the playoffs the following season, and the sixth in the last 12 years.



Green Bay Packers quarterback Aaron Rodgers (12) celebrates with wide receiver Randall Cobb (18) after an NFL football game against the Chicago Bears, Sunday, Dec. 29, 2013, in Chicago.

In Cincinnati, there's only one thing in mind: finally win a playoff game. The Bengals haven't done that since the 1990 season. They lost opening-round games in Houston each of the last two seasons as wild cards.

Broncos 34, Raiders 14

In Oakland, Calif., Peyton Manning set the NFL single-season record for yards passing and threw four first-half touchdown passes to help the Denver Broncos clinch the top seed in the AFC playoffs with a win over the Oakland Raiders.

Manning needed just one half to add the yards record to the touchdown mark he set last week and assure that the Broncos (13-3) won't have to leave home again until the Super Bowl if they make it that far. He threw touchdown passes to Eric Decker and Knowshon Moreno in the first quarter and added two to Demaryius Thomas in the second quarter. He broke Drew Brees' record of 5,476 yards set in 2011 with a 5-yard pass to Thomas with 13 seconds left in the half to make it 31-0.

That ended Manning's day having completed 25 of 28 passes for 266 yards. He finished the season with 5,477 yards and 55 touchdown passes.

Saints 42, Buccaneers 17

In New Orleands, Drew Brees passed for four touchdowns and ran for another score, and New Orleans clinched a wildcard spot with a victory over Tampa Bay.

Three of Brees' scoring strikes were longer than 40 yards—76 to Kenny Stills, 44 to Lance Moore and 41 to Robert Meachem. Brees passed for 381 yards, eclipsing 5,000 yards in a season for an unprecedented fourth time. He finished the season with 5,162 yards to go with 39 touchdowns.

Brees' other TD was a 10-yard pass to tight end Jimmy Graham, and the Saints (11-5) finished 8-0 in the Superdome.

Chargers 27, Chiefs 24, OT

In San Diego, Nick Novak kicked a 36-yard field goal with 5:30 left in overtime, ending the San Diego Chargers' three-year playoff drought with a victory over the Kansas City Chiefs.

The Chargers (9-7) needed help for weeks, and everything fell into place on Sunday, with the last piece being their win over a Chiefs team that already had clinched the AFC's No. 5 seed and rested 20 of 22 starters.

The Chargers, who trailed by 10 points in the fourth quarter, held the Chiefs on downs to win it after they reached the San Diego 41.

Earlier in the day, the Chargers got the help they needed when Miami and Baltimore both lost. San Diego has won four straight and five of six heading into a wild-card game next weekend at AFC North champion Cincinnati.

Seahawks 27, Rams 9

In Seattle, Malcolm Smith returned an interception 37 yards for a touchdown, Marshawn Lynch added a 2-vard scoring run and the Seahawks clinched the NFC West title and homefield advantage throughout the playoffs with a win over the St. Louis Rams.

Seattle (13-3) matched the franchise record for wins in a season and finally wrapped up the No. 1 seed after losses to San Francisco and last week to Arizona, which snapped a 14-game home winning streak.

Russell Wilson finished 15 of 23 for 172 yards. Seattle capped the victory with a 47-yard touchdown pass from Wilson to Golden Tate early in the fourth quarter that lacked the unsportsmanlike wave that got Tate flagged on a similar TD reception in St. Louis earlier this season.

Jets 20, Dolphins 7

In Miami Gardens, Fla., the Dolphins were eliminated from the scramble for the AFC's final wild-card berth by the Jets, who thrived in the role of spoilers against their archrivals.

Then owner Woody Johnson said coach Rex Ryan would return despite the Jets (8-8) sitting out the postseason themselves for the third year in a row.

Geno Smith led three long scoring drives, ran for a touchdown and threw for 190 yards, while two interceptions by rookie Dee Milliner and one by 35-year-old Ed Reed prevented a Miami comeback.

The Dolphins (8-8) squandered a shot at their first playoff berth since 2008 by losing their final two games. It was a dismal end to a roller-coaster season that included a four-game losing streak and a bullying scandal that drew national scrutiny.

Steelers 20, Browns 7

In Pittsburgh, Le'Veon Bell ran for 90 yards and a touchdown as the Steelers drubbed the Cleveland Browns, though Pittsburgh's bid to become the second team in NFL history to go winless in September and make the playoffs ended when San Diego edged Kansas City.

Ben Roethlisberger passed for 179 yards and a touchdown against two interceptions as the Steelers (8-8) won their third straight to avoid the franchise's first losing season since 2003. The victory also continued a furious second-half rally by the Steelers, who went 6-2 over the season's final eight weeks to fuel an improbable run at the AFC's final postseason spot.

Panthers 21, Falcons 20

In Atlanta, Cam Newton threw two touchdown passes, Greg Hardy had a team-record four sacks and the Panthers clinched the NFC South.

The Panthers (12-4) earned a

first-round bye and home-field advantage for at least one game as the No. 2 seed in the NFC.

Carolina, which won 11 of its final 12 games, set a team record by sacking Matt Ryan nine times. The defense also produced a touchdown on Melvin White's 7-yard interception return in the second quarter.

Patriots 34, Bills 20

In Foxborough, Mass., LeGarrette Blount rushed for a careerhigh 189 yards and two touchdowns and had two long kickoff returns as the New England Patriots beat the Buffalo Bills and clinched a first-round AFC bye.

Tom Brady was content to hand the ball off during a steady downpour against a team leading the NFL in sacks and second in interceptions. And Blount responded, leading the charge into the playoffs. Stephen Gostkowski helped make sure the Patriots (12-4) wouldn't have a game next weekend with four field goals.

While the Patriots earned their eighth bye in Bill Belichick's 14 seasons as coach, the Bills (6-10) missed the playoffs for the 14th straight year, the league's longest current streak.

49ers 23, Cardinals 20

In Glendale, Ariz., Phil Daw- Vikings 14, Lions 13 son made a 40-yard field goal as time expired to lift the San Francisco 49ers to a win over the Arizona Cardinals that clinched the NFC's No. 5 playoff seed.

San Francisco will visit Green Bay in the wild-card round next weekend.

Dawson had matched his career best with a 56-yarder to put the 49ers (12-4) up 20-17 with 1:45 to go. Jay Feely's 43-yard field goal then tied it for Arizona with 34 seconds left. LaMichael James' 45-yard kickoff return and two quick completions by Collin Kaepernick set up Dawson's game winner.

Colts 30, Jaguars 10

In Indianapolis, Andrew Luck threw for 282 yards and one touchdown, Robert Mathis reclaimed the NFL sacks lead and Adam Vinatieri joined the 2,000-point club.

The AFC South champs have won three straight, matching their longest streak of the season. Indy (11-5) finished with a 6-0 mark against division foes and has outscored its last three opponents 78-20.

Jacksonville (4-12) lost its third straight.

Titans 16, Texans 10

In Nashville, Tenn., Chris Johnson ran for 127 yards and a touchdown in what might be his last game with the Titans, a win that may help coach Mike Munchak's argument to stay on the job in 2014.

With their 14th straight loss, the Texans (2-14) clinched the No. 1 selection in next May's draft for the next head coach owner Bob McNair hires.

The Titans (7-9) scored 16 straight points in snapping a five-game home skid that was their longest since leaving Houston for Tennessee in 1997. They also won a second straight game for the first time since September, when they started 3-1.

Giants 20, Redskins 6

In East Ruthrford, N.J., New York's Jerrel Jernigan caught a 24-yard touchdown pass and ran 49 yards for another score in what might be Mike Shanahan's final game as Redskins

Shanahan has not only seen the Redskins (3-13) finish the season with an eight-game losing streak just a year after winning the NFC East, but his future is uncertain because of his shaky relationship with oftinjured franchise quarterback Robert Griffin III.

The Giants (7-9) also aren't going to the playoffs, but they closed the season with a 7-3 record after losing their first six games. It's a finish that probably will have two-time Super Bowl winning coach Tom Coughlin back next season, unless the 67-year-old decides he has had enough.

In Minneapolis, Rookie Cordarrelle Patterson scored two more touchdowns, including the go-ahead catch in the end zone in the fourth quarter, and the Vikings won their final game at the Metrodome after 32 seasons.

With the Vikings (5-10-1) and the Lions (7-9) out of the playoffs, both coaches also faced the possibility of their last full day with their teams. Jim Schwartz fell to 29-52 in five years with the Lions. Leslie Frazier raised his record with the Vikings in three-plus years to 21-33-1. Each of them has reached the playoffs once.

Curry's 29 lead Warriors over Cavs in OT

(AP)—Stephen Curry scored 29 points and made a clutch jumper with 13.5 seconds left as the Golden State

Warriors opened a long road trip with their fifth straight victory, 108-104 in overtime against the Cleveland Cavaliers on Sunday.

Curry overcame a poor shooting performance after halftime, and nearly recorded a triple-double by adding 11 assists and nine rebounds in 48 minutes. Curry was just 2 of 12 from the floor in the second half and OT.

David Lee scored 19 before fouling out for the Warriors, who are on the road for seven games over the next 13 days.

Kyrie Irving scored 27 for Cleveland, which dropped its fifth straight and lost its third tight game in a row. The Cavs lost by three in Boston on Saturday and two in doubleovertime against Atlanta on Thursday.

Irving drained a 3-pointer with 9.5 seconds left in regulation to tie it 99-all. The Warriors, who once trailed by 17, quickly pushed the ball up the floor for one final shot, but Curry's 8-foot runner in the lane bounced off the rim in the last second, sending the teams to overtime.

Curry threw his head back in disbelief at the miss. But the silky smooth point guard more than made up for it in the extra session.

After Irving missed, Curry fed Andre Iguodala on the wing and the Warriors forward alertly hit a cutting Draymond Green for a dunk to put Golden State ahead 106-104 with 59 seconds to go.

Jarrett Jack misfired for the Cavs, and with the 24-second shot clock winding down on the Warriors' next possession, Curry dropped a contested 23-foot jumper from the left side to put Golden State up by four.

The Warriors then stole Cleveland's last inbounds pass to wrap up a grind-it-out win.

Green went just 2 of 10 from the field but added 10 rebounds, and Klay Thompson scored 16 for Golden

Curry's shot wasn't falling after halftime, so he adjusted his game and picked up seven assists in the second half and overtime.

The loss wrapped up a strange weekend for the Cavs, who excused Andrew Bynum indefinitely on Saturday for conduct detrimental to the team. The Cavs are trying to trade the 7-foot center, who signed a two-year, \$24 million contract with Cleveland in July and showed flashes of being dominant again but became a headache.



Golden State Warriors' Stephen Curry (30) shoots over Cleveland Cavaliers' Anderson Varejao (17), from Brazil, during the third quarter of an NBA basketball game, Sunday, Dec. 29, 2013, in Cleveland.

Thunder 117, Rockets 86

In Oklahoma City, Kevin Durant had 33 points, 13 rebounds and five assists, and Oklahoma City won its second straight game without Russell Westbrook, beating Houston.

Jeremy Lamb added a career-high 22 points and five assists for Oklahoma City, which has the NBA's best record at 25-5. The Thunder have won 12 of their last 13 and 20 of their last 22 games.

Reggie Jackson, starting in Westbrook's place, had 16 points and eight assists.

Aaron Brooks had 17 points and Chandler Parsons scored 15 for Houston, which was playing its fourth game in five days. The Rockets, who had a three-game winning streak snapped, missed their first 12 shots and shot 36.5 percent from the field (31 of 85).

Spurs 112, Kings 104

In San Antonio, Manu Ginobili scored 28 points, Tony Parker added 22, and Tim Duncan had 17 points and 13 rebounds to lead San Antonio over Sacramento.

Boris Diaw had 14 points

and Tiago Splitter added 11 for San Antonio (24-7).

DeMarcus Cousins had 29 points and 14 rebounds, Isaiah Thomas added 27 points and Rudy Gay had 24 for Sacramento (9-20).

Struggling mightily on defense for much of the second half, the Spurs turned to their Big Three to close out the upstart Kings.

Ginobili, Duncan and Parker scored San Antonio's final 21 points in a 23-8 run to close the game.

Magic 109, Hawks 102

In Orlando, Fla., Arron Afflalo scored 21 points and Orlando beat Atlanta to give the Magic back-to-back victories for just the third time this sea-

Jeff Teague scored 22 points for the Hawks in their second game without twotime All-Star Al Horford, who is out indefinitely with a torn right pectoral muscle. The Hawks were also coming off three straight, grinding overtime games, the latest of which was Saturday night at home against Charlotte.

The Hawks made the

game's first bucket, a 3-point- points in the fourth quarter, Williams contributed big points er, but then trailed until a spurt in the fourth quarter gave them a three-point lead. But a 9-0 run midway through the final quarter put Orlando in control for good.

76ers 111, Lakers 104

In Los Angeles, Thaddeus Young scored seven of his 25 Evan Turner added 22 points, and Philadelphia snapped its 13-game road losing streak by beating the Lakers.

Spencer Hawes had 19 points and eight rebounds for the Sixers, who hadn't won away from Philadelphia since their road opener on Nov. 1.

Young and Michael Carter-

down the stretch as the lastplace Sixers held on for just their second win in 11 games

Nick Young scored 26 points on 6-for-21 shooting in the Lakers' fifth consecutive loss. Los Angeles also has lost five of six at Staples Center, winning just once at home since Nov. 24.

American baseball players thriving in Venezuela

Venezuela (AP)—It's about six weeks before pitchers and catchers report to spring training in the U.S., but in Venezuela, the nation's fiercely competitive professional league is in full swing, and it's drawn the biggest contingent of American players in decades.

In the land of Hugo Chavez, a place in many ways hostile to Americans owing to its reputation for rampant crime, a crumbling economy and an anticapitalist government, hitters and hurlers from across the U.S. are thriving as they try to impress big league scouts who flock here for the winter

It's not just about working on mechanics. Many come for the paycheck. While Venezuela's eight professional teams no longer can compete with major league salaries as they did during the oil-fueled economic boom of the 1960s, when Pete Rose wore a Caracas Leones jersey right after his rookie of the year season, they still pay from \$10,000 to \$20,000 a month, which can be two to three times what most players make in the U.S. minor leagues.

"Diapers aren't cheap," said C.J. Retherford, a 28-yearold Arizona native who made \$3,000 a month last season for the RedHawks of the sister cities of Fargo, North Dakota, and Moorhead, Minnesota. He now plays third base for the Tiburones, or Sharks, from the city of La Guaira outside Caracas—one of the nine "imports" the league allows each

For players accustomed to the small crowds of minor league stadiums back home, the frequently sold out Estadio Universitario in Caracas can be daunting. Abundant servings of rum and whiskey and a nerverattling cacophony of drums pump up the 25,000 screaming fans who hang on every pitch.

"It's Friday night football every game, all the game," said Jamie Romak, a 28-year-old outfielder for La Guaira who played for the St. Louis Cardinal's AAA team in Memphis, Tennessee. "You can have an eight run lead, blink your eyes twice and suddenly it's a one-run game."

Not everyone loves the experience. In addition to the challenges of playing abroad, The former Cleveland Indians from unfamiliar food to a foreign shortstop helped manage the language, Venezuela presents its own set of daily problems.

Foremost is security. Bodyguards lurk near the dugout, keeping a close eye on Venezuelan big leaguers whose milliondollar contracts make them prime kidnapping targets. Nobody wants to become the next Wilson Ramos, the Washington Nationals catcher who was abducted in 2011 at gunpoint outside his family's home in Valencia. He was rescued two days later after a nationwide manhunt.

The American players for La Guaira and rival Leones live a few blocks away from the ballpark at a five-star hotel, rarely venturing farther than the attached shopping mall. What they see of Venezuela is mostly what passes the bus window on long road trips between games. Their families? Only on Skype.

"You have to be smart," said Tony DeFrancesco, a coach for the Houston Astros' AAA team who is making his managerial debut in Venezuela with La Guaira. "I enjoy running, cycling and mountain climbing, but I just can't do it by myself here."

While the Americans are insulated from the worst of Venezuela's economic woes, in the almost three months since the season started they've seen prices jump and store shelves go bare of basic goods as inflation soared above 50 percent and the nation's currency plunged to a tenth of its official value in a flourishing black market.

Players cut from the roster sometime have to wait a week to find a flight out because Venezuelans trying to skirt rigid currency controls have bought up all the tickets. Then there was the home run derby at the All Star game, which abruptly ended after one batter due to a nationwide power outage.

Venezuela's politics are also a potential distraction. This year's season kicked off days after Chavez's successor, President Nicolas Maduro, expelled the top U.S. diplomat in the country, and anti-American graffiti dominates a wall next to the Caracas stadium's parking lot: "Not a dollar more for the capitalists."

"You can't let the political situation affect your game. When you're on the field you have to tune it all out," said Omar Vizguel, one of Venezuela's best contributions to the big leagues.

Leones this season to prepare for his debut as an infield coach with the Detroit Tigers.

But for those who roll with the punches, Venezuela is a showcase for second chances and the pursuit of dreams.

Take Retherford. Last May, he was given a 50-game suspension after testing positive for an amphetamine, which he says he used to get going after long bus journeys. The Los Angeles Dodgers cut all ties with its former minor league all-star, and he ended up with the RedHawks, a team not affiliated with major league baseball, earning barely enough to support his

In Venezuela he's proven he still has some magic, batting .322 with 11 home runs and 44 RBI. More than 5,000 followers on Twitter attest to his popularity among Venezuelan fans, who call him "El Conejo," the Rabbit, as much for his protruding teeth as for the luck provided by his hot bat.

Fawning female fans approach him for autographs when he leaves his Caracas hotel, but he says the star treatment was more intense in the smaller city of Barquisimeto, where he played last season for the Cardinals.

"I'd go to the mall and it was picture, picture, picture," says Retherford, brandishing a new tattoo with a rabbit hiding behind baby blocks spelling his 1-year-old son's name.

While he's aware the door to a big league career is becoming smaller as he gets older, he hopes his strong performance in Venezuela will attract the attention of teams in Japan or South Korea, where pay is better.

For now, both he and Romak insist they're enjoying their time in Venezuela. Compared to the bitter experience of AAA ball, where veterans bemoaning their demotion from the majors make life hell for up-and-coming prospects, the adrenalin and team spirit here is contagious, says Romak.

"It brings out the little kid in you," Romak said. "I've never played in the big leagues, but I don't think the environment is nearly as fun."



Bikers cruise past the Mariana Resort during the 2013 Tagaman Triathlon.

ROSELYN B. MONROYO

'The Crank' returns with a bang

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO roselyn_monroyo@saipantribune.com

Frank "The Crank" Camacho announced his return to the octagon cage with a knockout win in the Pacific Xtreme Combat in August in Guam.

Camacho, who took a leave of absence from PXC action for about six years, pummeled Japan's Koshi Matsumoto with punches to earn a TKO win at the 1:24 mark of the third round of their lightweight bout at the University of Guam Fieldhouse.

"This had to be one of the best game plans implementation in my career. Koshi Matsumoto is definitely no slouch in the MMA world. He is ranked No. 1 Shooto Japanese fighter by *FIGHTER Magazine*. I really studied him and with the help of my coaches and training partners," Camacho said in an earlier interview with *Saipan Tribune*.

The 24-year-old MMA fighter improved to an 11-2 record and earned his ninth win via TKO.

Trench Tech's Shane "Pikaboo" Alvarez also joined the August competition in Guam and won his debut in PXC. Alvarez earned a unanimous win over Spike 22's Tony "Rush" Reyes in their bantamweight bout.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Frank "The Crank" Camacho's hand is raised after winning against Japan's Koshi Matsumoto in Pacific Xtreme Combat 38 in Guam in August.

SIS reigns supreme

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO

REPORTER

Saipan International School lorded it over in interscholastic indoor volleyball tournaments this year.

The Geckos topped the 2013-2014 MISO Boys Volleyball League for its second straight championship in the annual event. SIS defeated perennial rival Grace Christian Academy in the finals.

The Geckos and the Eagles met anew in the 2013-2014 Coalition of Private Schools Sports Association Volleyball League and the former asserted their might over the other for another championship.

Then SIS bagged its third indoor volleyball title this season after sweeping Mt. Carmel School in the finals of the COPSSA girls high school league.

In other interscholastic competitions on Saipan, Whispering Palms took the junior varsity title in the COPSSA volleyball league, while Marianas High School extended its reign in the MISO girls caging.

Whispering Palms was also victorious in the U12 Interscholastic Football League winning the boys title against SIS and the girls tiara versus San Antonio Elementary School.



ROSELYN B. M

Saipan International School players and their coach pose for a group photo after winning the MISO volleyball title against Grace Christian Academy in November at the Marianas High School Gymnasium.

Gridiron makes comeback

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO

REPORTER

American football in the CNMI was revived this year.
The Commonwealth

The Commonwealth Football League Association made it happen, forming an adult team that played against a selection from Guam at the Airport Field in May. The CNMI Sharks-Guam tussle was the first tackle football match played at the pitch since 2002.

CFLA also brought back peewee football in the Commonwealth and kicked off its youth league in November. Three teams are playing in the

CFLA Youth Football Warrior/Midget League—the Eastern Lightning, Northern Saints, and Southern Thunder. The Lightning is on top of the league with its unbeaten 3-0 record.

The Eastern Lightning is coached by Dave Ada, who is joined by defensive coordinator Jaime Martinez, offensive coordinator Al-Lee Terry, and assistant coach Jay Tilipao. Southern Thunder is coached by Jermaine Catching, who is assisted by Mike Tenorio, Clyde Kaipat, Alvin Taitano, and Syl Teregeyo. Calling the shots for the Northern Saints are head coach Vince Castro, defensive coordinator Joe Ocampo, and assistant coach Darryl Atalig.

Signature sports events draw crowd

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO

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The CNMI's signature sports competitions lured numerous off-island participants.

In March, the islands had the

In March, the islands had the Saipan Marathon, which drew over 800 runners. Saipan's very own Mamiko Oshima-Berger led winners in the annual race, ruling the ultra marathon (50K) with a record-breaking time. Oshima-Berger submitted 4:11:02 to beat the time of 2012 winner Yoko Yamazawa (4:19:21).

The 2013 XTERRA Saipan Championship also took place in March with couple Ben Allen of Australia and Jacqui Slack of Great Britain winning the men's and women's division crowns. Allen defended his title against former

XTERRA World champion Dan Hugo and Olympian Olivier Marceau. In the women's division, Slack stunned many time XTERRA Saipan Renata Bucher.

The visiting pro triathletes stayed on Saipan for another week to compete in the Tagaman Triathlon and Allen and Slack picked up where they left off ruling the longer race.

The CNMI hosted two more triathlon events for off-island athletes via the Rota Blue and Tinian Turquoise triathlons.

For its season-ending offering, the CNMI, through the Marianas Visitors Authority and NMI Cycling Federation ,held the seventh edition of the Hell of Marianas Century Cycle Race.

Japanese pro Kasuhiro Yamamoto topped the 100-kilometer race, while Australia's Jodie Willet repeated as champion in the women's division.



gering illness. He was 55.

Wabol left valuable contributions to CNMI sports as a player, official, and coach. He represented the Commonwealth in various regional golf tournaments. He coached in Little League, baseball, basketball, and golf, and was a board member of the Northern Marianas Amateur Sports Association at the time of his death.

sports community, as it lost

Hall of Famer Jess Wabol.

Wabol died on Oct. 10 due to a lin-

"He was a great coach. The MCS Knights took the basketball cham-

pionship in 1983 and he was our coach," said Basketball Association of Northern Mariana Islands official Abner Venus in an earlier interview with *Saipan Tribune*. "He will be missed."

"Jess was a member of the CNMI Sport Hall of Fame and a long-serving member of our Board of Directors. Jess represented the CNMI at the Pacific Games nine times, and was a local legend in the sport of golf, and a pillar in the sporting community. We will miss his friendship and his wise counsel," NMASA president Michael White said in an earlier interview with Saipan Tribune.



ROSELYN B. MONROY

The CNMI Sharks and Guam get ready for the next play during an exhibition game at the Airport Field in May.

Athletes get international exposure

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO

CNMI athletes continued to have opportunities to compete in off-island tournaments this year.

In January, swimmer Kensuke Kimura represented the CNMI in the 6th Australian Youth Olympic Festival

In June, the CNMI competed in 2013 Asia Pacific-Middle East Baseball Tournament in the Philippines.

Also in June, the Northern Marianas Athletics sent five athletes to the 2013 Oceania Area Championships held in Tahiti.

In July, volleyball players Clay McCullough-Stearns and John Nekaifes participated in the beach volleyball competition in the 27th Summer Universiade in Kazan, Russia.

In July, Rezne Wong, Victoria Chentsova, Angel De Jesus, and Kensuke Kimura joined the 15th FINA World Championships in Barcelona, Spain, while Jesus Iguel represented the CNMI in the 14th IAAF World Championships in Moscow, Russia.

In September, 11 players from Northern Marianas Badminton Association competed in the 2nd GNBF Annual Summer Friendship Badminton Tournament in Dededo, Guam.

In October, Butch Sublemente, Peter Prestley, and Lewie Tenorio saw action in the 2013 XTERRA World Championship in Maui, Hawaii, while MP United players also left the island late October to participate in the 2013 Pilipinas Cup International Invitational Youth Tournament in Laguna, Philippines.

The CNMI's junior tennis players were the last to compete in offisland tournaments this year with Carol Lee, Chris Cajigan, and Michael Ren heading to Australia.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO From left, Rezne Wong, Angel de Jesus, Victoria Chentsova, and Kensuke Kimura pose for a photo while waiting for their events in the 15th FINA World Championships in Barcelona, Spain, in August.

Jr. tennis players triumph anew

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO

The CNMI's junior tennis players experienced the sweet taste of success anew in 2013.

The Commonwealth bets extended their reign in the 2013 North Pacific Regional Championships (formerly known as the North Pacific Qualifying Tournament) held on Saipan in June, dominating players from Palau, the Federated States of Micronesia, and Guam.

The Jeff Race-coached CNMI Team swept the singles crowns in the annual tournament with Thea Minor and Jake Lee clinching the U18 championships, Chris Cajigan and Negahr Rastguiy taking the U15 titles, and Carol Lee and Michael Ren bagging the U12 plums. The host lorded it over, too in the doubles competition.

With the CNMI winning top honors in the regional tournament for the nth time, majority of its players earned slots on the North Pacific Team that traveled to Fiji in August to compete in the 2013 Pacific Oceania Junior Championships

In the POJC, Race's wards continued their impressive showing. The squad, which was composed of Lee, Ren, Rastguiy, Cajigan, Minor, Lee, Tania Tan, Robbie Schorr, Tammy U12 singles and had another one in the Junior ITF ranking event for the first



ROSELYN B. MONROYO

The CNMI Junior Tennis Team and coach Jeff Race pose for a photo for TAGA Sports late this year.

Ackerman, Moris Villanueva, Tommy Choi, Amami Sakano, and Mikayla Lopez, gained eight semis berths in the singles division and all six finals berth in the doubles.

Lee won the gold medal in the girls

doubles after teaming up with Tan. The CNMI nailed four more gold medals in the doubles competition.

Besides its success in the North qualifier and POJC, the CNMI earned an early feat in May when it hosted a time. Dubbed as the IT&E Northern Marianas Open Junior Championships, the U18 competition drew players from Japan, Hong Kong, Korea, U.S., China, Singapore, Thailand, the Philippines, South Africa, Germany, Guam,

Off-island athletes shine in collegiate tourneys

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO

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Three CNMI athletes made waves in collegiate competitions this year.

Golfer Leina Kim earned awards and made historic feats in Colorado, baseball's Joshua Jones got the starting job in Kansas, and basketball's Jericho Cruz emerged as one of the top amateur players in the Philippine collegiate leagues.

Kim got her first tournament victory in the collegiate ranks in April and led the Colorado State University-Pueblo to a historic title win in the Southwest Motors Lady ThunderWolf Invitational. Kim and her two teammates made history for the Thunderwolves when they won the tournament against Regis University by 48 strokes—the biggest winning margin in school history.

The former Marianas Baptist Academy student also set a school record

The tug-of-war between North-

ern Marianas Amateur Sports Association and Division of

Sports and Recreation ended

this year with the former given the right

to manage and operate the contested

while NMASA was included in the ap-

proved budget for fiscal year 2014 and

took over the management of the facil-

ity in October. NMASA's share from

the pie was \$193, 228, allowing the as-

Former DSR head and respected

sports official Tony Rogolifoi was named

NMASA executive director and is in

Less than three months after assum-

ing the responsibility at the complex,

significant improvements took place at

the track and field facility, the Francis-

charge of the takeover of the facility.

The DSR was eventually disbanded.

Oleai Sports Complex.

sociation to hire staff.



Cruz

after shooting a 69 in a tournament in September and went on to win RMAC 2012-2013 RMAC Golfer of the Year and Freshman of the Year awards.

Over in Kansas, Joshua Jones earned a perfect record as a starter for Colby Community College. In his first five games National Junior College Athlet-



Jones

ics Association Region VI, the Kagman High School graduate got a 3-0 winloss record and two no-decisions in 29 innings pitched. He gave up only five unearned runs, 15 hits, and three baseon-balls. The lefty pitcher then had 38 strikeouts and an ERA of 1.50.

Duplicating Jones' notable perfor-



Kim

mance in the collegiate ranks was Cruz, who was among the top scorers for the Adamson University in the University Athletic Association of the Philippines. Cruz was later named to the Philippine National Team that won the gold medal in the 2013 Southeast Asian Games held in Myanmar early this year.

NMASA takes over sports complex

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO

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The Oleai Sports Complex is now under the care of the Northern Marianas Amateur Sports Association.

co "Tan Ko" Palacios Ballfield, Miguel "Tan Ge" Pangelinan Ballfield, and the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium. More improvements will be done

next year, according to Rogolifoi, adding that regular programs will also be in placed next season to make full use of the newly improved complex.

The complex is expected to undergone a major facelift once NMASA fully operates on its own and identify funding sources for its programs. Right now, NMASA is waiting for the Senate approval on House Bill 18-111.

Known as Northern Marianas Sports Act of 2013 and was introduced by Rep. Tony Sablan (IR-Saipan) and approved by the House in October this year, the bill will give NMASA authority on levying of fees for usage of facilities, awarding of vending and advertising rights, and operation of a public lottery provisions that are important in NMASA's bid to function on its own and raise funds to support its operations and programs.

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The starting 11 of the CNMI U14 Team pose for a photo before playing against Guam in the FC U14 Championship 2014 Qualifiers in Beijing, China in April.

Historic win at AFC takes spotlight

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO roselyn_monroyo@saipantribune.com

he CNMI U14 National Team's victory in the AFC U14 Championship 2014 Qualifiers in Beijing, China was the most celebrated and talked about sports story of this year.

It must be, as the win was a first in any Asian Football Confederation tournament the CNMI was invited to. To top it off, the victory was recorded against the Commonwealth's rival Guam. Sunjoon Tenorio claimed a piece of that history, as his goal in the eighth minute of the second half lifted the Teen Ayuyus to a 1-0 upset over its neighbor.

Joining Tenorio on the team that made history for CNMI football were Alex Park, Clayton Izuka, Joshua Abragan, Steven Martin, Euly James Ermitanio, Alan Hinson, David Mafnas, Cody Leon, Joshua De Leon, Louie Bryle Calayag, Emmanuel Aniana, Mareko Tekopua, Jherico Tiamzon, Christopher Aninzo, Albert Bergancia, Cole Chambers, Won Kwan Kim, Logan Mister, Anthony Fruit, and Edwin Kim. Wai Wo "Jacky" Lee coached the squad and was assisted by Jersh Angeles. Northern Mariana Islands Football Association technical director Johann Noetzel was the goalkeeper coach while Derek Chambers was the team manager.

The U14 qualifier in Beijing was one of the many off-island tournaments the busy CNMI teams competed in.

In February, the Blue Ayuyus played in the Asian Football Confederation 2014 Challenge Cup Qualifiers at the Dashrath Stadium in Kathmandu, Nepal, colliding against the host, Palestine, and Bangladesh.



CNMI assistant coach Jershwin Angeles celebrates with players after beating Guam, 1-0.



The CNMI's Edwin Kim. 12. tries to anchor an attack against Guam.

About a month after its historic win AFC U16 Qualifying Tournament. The in Beijing, the CNMI returned to China and this time the islands' girls U14 team participated in the AFC U14 Girls Regional Championships, challenging Guam, South Korea, and

the host squad.

Up next for the Commonwealth was the 2013 EAFF U18 Youth Tournament held at the Guam National Training Center

in Dededo in August. In the East Asian Football Federation-sanctioned event, the CNMI players were pitted against powerhouse North Korea, Hong Kong, Guam, and Chinese-Taipei.

For its final off-island tournament of the year, CNMI travelled anew to China (Wuhan) in September for the

Teen Ayuyus challenged China, North Korea, and Myanmar.

Despite its commitment to off-island tournaments, the CNMI through the

Northern Mariana Islands Football Association still managed to boost its local program through the hosting of its regular tournaments and leagues for the youth, adults, and students.

NMIFA also welcomed a new member—the Tinian Premier Football Club.

NMIFA then closed the season by reviving the Marianas Football Cup, which was last held in 2010 on Saipan. The CNMI won in the U12 match, while Quality Distributors defeated the host's U19 national team.